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# THE CREED FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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# THE CREED FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

BY

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TO MY DEAR FRIENDS

GEORGE AND SIBYL SHERINGHAM,

BUT FOR WHOSE SYMPATHY AND
ENCOURAGEMENT THIS BOOK MIGHT
NEVER HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT.

# PREFACE

THIS book is an endeavour to remove the obstacles, real and fancied, which stand in the way of a large class of otherwise intelligent and educated men from a hearty acceptance of the truths enshrined in the Creed, which is the foundation of the Christian religion. To the frivolous, and those who are unable to discern the signs of the times, it makes no appeal. We do not write for those who give as their reasons for unbelief the admitted worldliness of many of the clergy, the hypocrisy of some who profess and call themselves Christians, the bigotry of sectarians, and the prevalence in the sphere of religion of that party spirit which is so ugly a feature in secular politics; nor are we concerned with those who regard money-making or 'sport' as the chief things that make life interesting, further than to deplore the fact that under present conditions the Church cannot reach them. Our message is to that large class of educated Englishmen who may be described as 'men of good will'—men who are keenly interested in social and political questions, and even in religion from the point of view of social evolution, but whose attitude towards what they call 'Institutional Christianity' is determined by considerations involving difficulties partly historical, partly scientific (or perhaps metaphysical) which they think justify them in standing aloof from it. They have no feelings of hostility towards either the Church or its ministers, with whom they are often on quite friendly terms, and many of them are so far nominal members of the Church of England that they avail themselves of its rites when they wish to get married, or require to be buried. But they are certainly unbelievers in the Christian religion as a philosophy of life, for they

reject its theology, which is the expression in philosophical language of the ideas that flow naturally, or logically, from belief in the Revelation of God in the Person of Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Various reasons are given in justification of this rejection of the Creed of the Catholic Church by more or less educated persons living in the twentieth century, the commonest being that the advance of science has made it impossible for them to accept its dogmas. But this opinion is a superstitious inheritance from the last generation. The 'Creed of Science,' of which we used to hear so much in the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century, is entirely out of date, and has been well described by Professor Tennant as 'a sandwich of genuine science between two layers of metaphysic, the lower of which consisted of presuppositions concerning reality taken over from the language and thought of unreflective "common sense," and the upper of generalisations from the results of scientific research *illogically identified with universally valid principles.*'[1] It used to be supposed that science involved belief in materialism as an explanation of the universe, and miracles were held to conflict with, and constitute a breach of, the 'inexorable laws by which it is governed.' But at the present day materialism has come to be as utterly discredited by scientific men as epicycles or 'phlogiston,' and there is considerable doubt among them whether some of the 'laws' by which the universe is governed may not have to be repealed.

Nearly all recent discoveries have been destructive, not of religious, but of *scientific* dogmas firmly believed in and boldly taught in the nineteenth century. The discovery of radio-activity, for example, was a serious blow to the conservation of energy which a very few years ago was regarded almost in the light of an axiom, and as Mr. Chesterton says, 'even the law of gravity, dancing to the tune of Professor Einstein, is behaving with lamentable levity.' It is, indeed, becoming more and more generally recognised that chemistry and physics have their roots in mathematics, which is destined

[1] *Cambridge Theological Essays.*

to forge a link between physical and psychological science, and establish a real scientific philosophy that may be compared with other schematic systems of which the Christian philosophy is the most important, the most stable, and the one most in evidence.

From these considerations, it will be seen that there is no foundation whatever for the current opinion that the advance in knowledge—say within the last 100 years—has rendered it more, instead of less, difficult to believe in the Creed of Christendom.

What, then, should be the attitude of intelligent men living in the twentieth century towards the Creed of the Catholic Church? At least it may claim the initial respect of serious examination at their hands, if only on the ground of its acceptance in the past as a rule of life and worship by the most advanced nations of the world. Instead of which it is frequently judged and condemned by those who ought to know better on the most frivolous pleas, as, for instance, that it stands or falls with the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, or that belief in the Creed carries with it belief in the story of Jonah and the whale and other Hebrew legends, as the new moon carries the old in its arms. That such objections should be seriously urged by otherwise intelligent persons as excuses for unbelief would seem to call for explanation. Their attitude is probably due to a state of mind called by modern psychologists a '*complex*,' which is a kind of mental warp in which the ratiocinative process is not free, but carried on in subjection (though quite unconsciously) to some deeply rooted instinct. This particular 'complex,' we think, has its roots in the instinct of self-preservation, albeit of the lower self. It is an instinct of revolt against what is known to theologians as 'The Offence of the Cross.' To admit the truth of the Creed involves *conversion*, or turning quite round: in other words, a complete revolution of former standards respecting our duty to God and our fellow-men. This is always a more or less painful process, for it involves confession of sin and pledge of amendment consequent on looking facts in the face. And the first unpleasant fact these gentlemen

will have to recognise is that, hitherto, they have been leading lives of argumentative futility. They want to abolish war, but have little faith in 'Leagues of Nations' for that purpose where the nations are represented by time-serving politicians. They are distressed at the evils that seem inseparable from modern social conditions, but are not prepared to leap from the frying-pan of 'civilisation' into the fire of Communism, Collectivism, Syndicalism, and other cloud-cuckoo schemes for making everybody happy. Meanwhile, they find themselves obliged to 'buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest,' which is the First and Great Commandment of Mammon; to 'think Imperially' (e.g. to acquiesce in the slaughter of Christians by the Turk for fear of offending Mohammedans in India); to vote for Smith who is the *enemy* of Labour, or Jones who is the *enemy* of Capital, or, more likely, not to vote at all; and generally to look on helplessly while the world goes on from bad to worse. At present they do not recognise that men cannot save themselves, but require a Saviour who will save them *from* themselves. They do not believe in the Fall of man because 'science knows nothing of a fall but only of a rise' (as, indeed, of a great many other things which nevertheless may be true); but it is not worth while disputing about it, for we are all agreed that a rise from present conditions is absolutely necessary if the human race is to be preserved from what everybody would admit to be a fall—viz. a decline from civilisation to barbarism. They do, however, concede, and indeed often say, that the evils from which we are suffering 'have their root in human nature, and suppose we can never alter that.' Well, the Christian religion professes not only to be able to alter it, but has actually done so in countless instances. Given a fair chance, it will alter it in sufficient numbers to transform the kingdoms of the world into the Kingdom of God, and the establishment of His righteousness (or justice) in the place of the kingdom of Satan and his iniquity (i.e. in-equity).

So long as large numbers of the educated classes stand aloof from the Church, and are content merely to deplore the

evils with which, on their own admission, they are unable to cope, it cannot be said to have had a fair chance ; but if we can succeed in removing the intellectual difficulties that have hitherto prevented them from accepting the Creed of the Church, we may fairly challenge them to give any worthy reason for remaining outside its communion, in which case this book will not have been written in vain.

After all, if there be a God, it is surely not unreasonable to believe, in common with large numbers of men of the first intellectual rank in past and present times, that in the Person of Jesus Christ He intervened on the stage of this world's history, in order to accomplish some great and Divine purpose of benevolence in, and by means of, a society pledged to carry out His Will concerning it. That society is the Catholic Church, represented in this country by the Church of England. Together with her daughter churches in English-speaking countries, she constitutes the Anglican Communion—the youngest, but by far the most intellectually vigorous, of the three Communions (the others being the Roman, and Eastern Orthodox) into which the Catholic Church is unhappily at present divided. This society, which is easily recognised by certain marks distinguishing it from all other *soi-disant* Christian bodies, claims, and has for 1900 years claimed, to possess the key to all political and social problems, and to solve them by a special process, viz. by promoting the salvation of its individual members from sin, which lies at the root of social discord, by means of a sacramental system of unification with their Divine Head, the scientific aspects of which will be discussed in its place. If this claim is well founded, it will not be denied that it holds out a prospect of really influencing the course of events, for it arouses that *esprit de corps* which is a strong appeal to noble minds. What greater privilege could there be than to take part as a soldier in the army of the living God in the age-long conflict between the spiritual forces of good and evil ?

For the situation to-day is more serious than it has been for more than two centuries, and is moreover quite apparent. The ' rulers of the darkness of this world ' (Eph. vi. 12) have

lately mustered the whole of their forces for a final attack on the civilisation of the more advanced races of the world, which still retains, in spite of defects, some elements of a Christian character, and must be destroyed if they are to attain their ends. When the British Empire was in danger, Englishmen thought no sacrifice was too great to deliver it from the German peril. Men of education and refinement enlisted as private soldiers, sharing with labourers, artisans, and shop assistants, the discipline without which no army can hold together. In the face of a graver and more far-reaching peril will the educated classes refuse to sacrifice not only their intellectual pride, but some of their tastes and inclinations, to the discipline of the Catholic Church? We refer to such things as rules for attendance at public worship, the observance of days and seasons of fasting and abstinence which, framed for the benefit of all, should be kept by all. These, it may be said, are unimportant details, but if the war against the world, the flesh and the devil is to be undertaken in earnest, and carried on with vigour, it should be a point of honour with the educated members of the Church to submit to the same discipline as their humbler brethren, as a sergeant in the British army would not dream of making a slovenly salute for fear the privates might follow his example.

The assertion we have made above will, of course, be disputed. It may be asked why, if the Church possesses the key to the social problem, it still awaits solution, and the answer is that the whole history of the Middle Ages is a history of the process of solution. The Middle Ages were very imperfectly Christian, but they were Christian in the sense that the Church did concern itself *primarily* with the salvation of society, and only secondarily with the private sins of individuals, which were provided for in the tribunal of penance. She was the protector of the poor and weak against the rich and powerful. The monasteries kept alight the torch of learning in an age devoted to war, and were the homes of industry and education to which the privilege of access was open to all, rich and poor. Up to the time of the Reformation, two economic doctrines were not only preached

but enforced by the Church Courts. One of them was the prohibition of interest for money lent, and the other the doctrine of the 'just price,' i.e. *not what a thing could be got for*, but what it ought to fetch in order to enable the maker of it to lead a decent life according to a recognised standard. 'These,' says Professor Ashley ('Economic History'), 'were not mere pious opinions, but principles universally practised and *accepted by all business men*,' and thus for 1500 years the 'selfish machine' of modern economics was not allowed to exist.

The consequence was that, in England at least, by the end of the fifteenth century, which Professor Thorold Rogers called 'The Golden Age of the English labourer,' poverty may be said to have practically disappeared, and the ecclesiastical authorities began to be alarmed for the souls of the people in danger from the sins of pride and luxury. Hence the quaint 'sumptuary laws' of the period. Translated into modern terms, they would prohibit a tradesman with only one assistant from having turtle soup and champagne for dinner, except on Sundays and the greater feasts of the Church; they would make it illegal for a costermonger's wife to wear on her person furs of greater value than £50; they would restrict the possession of the more expensive makes of motor-cars to peers of the realm, etc. etc. With the Reformation, which was conceived in lust and born of oppression, all this came to an end. The destruction of the religious houses, and, later, the 'Great Pillage' of the churches, paved the way for the abolition of the worship of God and the substitution for it of the worship of Mammon. After a false dawn in the reign of Charles I. under Laud, this country became wholly delivered over to idolatry. Covetousness, which S. Paul calls rank idolatry, and classes with nameless vices, ceased to be regarded as a deadly sin, and was elevated to the rank of a positive virtue called 'business enterprise.'[1] In the nineteenth century it was so openly professed, that men actually built a 'science' upon it, which they named 'political economy.' It is commonly believed that science

[1] See chap. vi. for a sad, albeit amusing, example.

has delivered us from the cruelties of primitive religions, but the sacrifice of children to Moloch in 1400 B.C. was swift and merciful compared with the sacrifice of children to Mammon in A.D. 1800 in English factories. And if it be replied that the Ammonite children were sacrificed to superstition, and the English ones to mere greed, the answer is that superstition is only another name for science which has become discredited. The political economy of a hundred years ago was a mass of delusions about the 'laws of nature,' by which they sought to justify these cruelties, not a whit less insane than the belief of the Ammonites that Nature, which they personified as Moloch, required to be propitiated with human sacrifices.

But enough has been said to establish a *prima facie* case in favour of the Christian religion as the only means whereby society can be saved from dangers that are growing more and more threatening. It has been shaken to its foundations by the Great War. A second shock—let us say the triumph of one or other of the two contending parties of Capital and Labour—may lay it in ruins. Whether Cain kill Abel, or Abel Cain, the mischief will have been done, and, indeed, for those who can discern the signs of the times the Crisis, or 'Judgment Day,' of the Nations of the world cannot now be far off. We read in Matthew (xxv. 31 and f.) that 'when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, before Him shall be gathered all *nations* : and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from his goats.' The nations who have ruled in righteousness (or justice), have seen to it that the humblest shall not lack food or clothing, who have provided for the sick, shewed hospitality to the foreigner, and dealt mercifully with the erring, will be accounted worthy to enter the kingdom prepared for them, before the foundation of the world, where the social problem will be solved and all tears wiped away. Those nations, on the other hand, who have rejected the laws of God, and shaped their home and foreign policy in accordance with the laws of Mammon, where the whole machinery of the State has been devoted to the cultivation and preservation of the fruits of covetousness,

will be delivered over to destruction by the fires of civil war and anarchy, the fuel for which they have been industriously accumulating for generations. They will have rejected the 'Catholic Faith' (or belief in the true God), and, in consequence, will 'perish everlastingly.' With the Judgment will come the answer to our Lord's question—'When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?' It depends on us who are living at the present day. Is it large enough—one would think a grain of mustard seed would suffice—to take in the idea that Christ through His Church has provided means whereby the 'unruly wills and affections of sinful men' may be transformed by the engrafting of a new principle of life in their members, viz. the two great sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion? That this was the general belief of Christendom up to the time of the Reformation is indisputable, and we are not aware of any scientific discoveries which render its acceptance more difficult at the present day than for the first 1500 years of the Church's existence. Indeed, the most recent advances in biology have gone far to strengthen the theory that all forms of life, from the lowest to the highest, have their origin in, and owe their development to, an ordered periodic interchange of potential and kinetic energy on every plane of consciousness.

The Judgment will not take place until God shall have 'made up the number of His elect,' or those who have *chosen* to take His side against the Prince of this world. The social fabric may still be saved from disintegration if the educated classes will co-operate with their humbler brethren in the 'fellowship of the Holy Ghost' which springs from the 'love of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.' If they will not, bitter will be their remorse when they discover too late that they have made through cowardice the Great Refusal.[1]

[1] '. . . l'ombra di colui
Che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto.'
Dante, *Inferno*, Cant. III. 60.

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'Cease, my much-respected Herr von Voltaire, shut thy sweet voice; for the task appointed thee seems finished. Sufficiently hast thou demonstrated . . . that the Mythus of the Christian Religion looks not in the eighteenth century as it did in the eighth. . . . But what next? Wilt thou help us to embody the divine Spirit of that Religion in a new Mythus, in a new vehicle and vesture, that our Souls, otherwise too like perishing, may live? What! thou hast no faculty in that kind? Only a torch for burning, no hammer for building? Take our thanks, then, and——thyself away.'

CARLYLE, *Sartor Resartus*, bk. ii. ch. ix.

# PROEM

'To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it, the Church hath thought good to order, That none hereafter shall be Confirmed, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments.'—THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION.

'Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying.'

ART. XXXIV.

OF the wisdom or unwisdom of the various changes made in this country during the epoch vaguely referred to as the Reformation, opinions differed and still differ; but it will not be disputed that, whatever their effect, the ecclesiastical authorities were right in *aiming* at edification. The writer offers no opinion here as to whether the custom of communicating newly baptised infants, which still prevails in the Eastern portion of the Church Catholic, but has been discontinued in the West for many centuries, is one which comes under the heading of 'ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority' which it is competent for a local church to change or abolish. He merely calls attention to the fact that the Church of England regards those persons who believe in the Creed, use the Lord's Prayer, and endeavour to keep the Ten Commandments as fit for Confirmation and Communion; providing, of course, that they 'truly and earnestly repent of their sins and are in love and charity with all men.' This is the minimum requirement for full membership of the Church and admission to all its privileges. But in the present day there are large numbers

of persons who reject the Creed, have ceased to pray (except, perhaps, in certain emergencies), and take small account of the commandments other than the Sixth and Eighth.[1] For this attitude of mind towards God and His Church, various reasons are alleged; traced down to their root they amount to this. Dogma is incompatible with enlightenment and progress, prayer is opposed to the 'Reign of Law,' and morality rests on human and not Divine Sanction. The writer hopes to prove (i) that dogma of one kind or another lies at the foundation of all progress in thought, and that the dogmas of the Church have enlightened the darkness in which man was groping for the truth before the Advent of our Lord; (ii) that prayer is part of the machinery whereby the world is governed and directed; and (iii) that the most shocking results would follow if the utilitarian theory of morals were pushed to its logical conclusion.

[1] Or, as a Roman Catholic would say, the Fifth and Seventh.

# THE CREED FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

## CHAPTER I

### THE ŒCUMENICAL CREED

'I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made: Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end.

'And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father (and the Son), Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen.'

THE above confession of Faith, commonly called the Nicene, or Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, is more properly known as the Œcumenical Creed, because it is the only one that has been received on the authority of a Council of the whole Church. The so-called 'Apostles' Creed,' in its present form, is of later date, and the evidence of Apostolic authorship is slender. The 'Athanasian' Creed, which only the ignorant now believe to have been the composition of S. Athanasius, though a most valuable document, must be regarded merely as a commentary on the Œcumenical Creed, which took its

final shape at Constantinople in the year 381. The Athanasian Creed (or rather Hymn) was not received in Rome until about A.D. 930, though there is evidence of its having been sung in France and England long before. The author is supposed by some to have been S. Hilary, the great Bishop of Arles, but its authorship is of little consequence, as its value depends on its own merits as a *commentary* on the Œcumenical Creed. It is this last which has behind it the authority of the whole Church, which is the organ of the same Holy Spirit who 'spake by the Prophets.'

Reduced to its lowest terms, the Œcumenical Creed is a statement that the true God is a Trinity in Unity, that the Word became Flesh in order to reconcile us to God, and that this Divine Man founded a Society which has come down to us at the present day, and will last for all time. It may be described as the Church's dogmatic minimum, 'the Faith once (for all) delivered to the Saints,' belief in which is essential to salvation. All other dogmas (or settled beliefs) are of secondary authority, in the sense that they may legitimately be called in question. To take an extreme case, there can be no doubt that the Church has always believed and taught that our Lord was born of a pure Virgin without the intervention of a human father. To deny this dogma, or even call it in question, is inconceivably rash and presumptuous, and almost impossible to reconcile with belief in the Church as the Organ of the Holy Spirit, but it is not *explicitly* set forth in the Œcumenical Creed, and is therefore not, strictly speaking, a *fundamental* dogma. On the other hand, the Ascension of our Lord's *body* into Heaven *is* a fundamental dogma, and one which presents far greater difficulties in our present state of knowledge. It will be dealt with in its place.

The opinion that the Œcumenical Creed makes unreasonable demands on our credulity is one which prevails widely, but, with the exception of the last-mentioned dogma, it is difficult to see why it should commend itself less to the twentieth century than to the fourth. The materialistic theory of the universe, which was held in so much esteem fifty years ago by our leading scientists, has been shattered

by the researches of Clerk Maxwell, Lorentz, Larmor, and, particularly, the late Lord Kelvin into the nature of the atom, and it would not be too much to say that it is held no longer by any competent scientist either in England or the continents of Europe and America. With the disappearance of mere blockish materialism the 'Conflict between Science and Religion,' of which we used to hear so much, may be said to have come to an end. 'So far from its being true,' as Mr. G. K. Chesterton says, in his amusing way, that 'science is moving away from the supernatural . . . it is moving *towards* the supernatural with the rapidity of a railway train.'[1] And in connexion with what was said above, we cannot do better than quote the same brilliant humorist: 'If anyone says the Faith arose in ignorance and savagery, the answer is simple; it didn't. It arose in the Mediterranean civilisation in the full summer of the Roman Empire. The world was swarming with sceptics, and pantheism was as plain as the sun when Constantine nailed the cross to the mast.'[2] It may here be worth while to relate an incident which came under the author's own notice. He had sent a friend to a well-known London priest to be prepared for baptism and confirmation. The priest told him that only the week before a man, whose name he at once recognised as that of a leader of scientific thought, had come to him for the same purpose, save that he had been baptised. This gentleman had informed him that his scientific studies had led him to belief in the Christian Revelation, and that he wished to become a partaker in the spiritual privileges offered by the Church.

But it would be ridiculous to attribute the unbelief of the ordinary average Englishman to his habits of exact thought. There is nothing this kind of man hates more than connected thinking. He gets his opinions, for the most part, from newspapers and popular magazines whose business it is to serve them up ready made. For him the serious business of life is either money-making or 'sport,' but though in reality

[1] *Orthodoxy*, chap. ix. [2] *Ibid.*

an unbeliever, he calls himself, as a rule, a 'Protestant,' and sometimes goes to church or chapel on Sunday evenings. To him this book is not addressed, for all appeal to him must be made through the emotions. Such appeals are often successful and result in some kind of conversion; it may be to some *soi-disant* 'Christian' superstition, or it may be to the Catholic Faith, which is often held in these cases in a spirit of genuine, though unenlightened, piety.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that there are large numbers of really thoughtful people who, for various reasons, profess themselves unable to accept a statement which sets forth in such definite terms what ought to be believed about God. It would perhaps be unfair to say that their chief difficulty lies in the word 'ought,' but it is not unreasonable to attribute their repugnance to the principle of authority in religion to the chaotic condition of Christendom at the present day. It is an unfortunate state of things, but as it cannot be altered for a long time to come we must make the best of it.

This question of authority will be dealt with in its place; suffice it to say now that, apart from administration, the 'Authority of the Church' does not reside in any individual priest or bishop, not even in the Bishop of Rome himself. It is no paradox to say that the Papal claims have done more to undermine the principle of authority in the Catholic Church than all the scientists from Galileo to Darwin. But as this book is addressed primarily to Englishmen who, for the most part, reject the Papal claims, it is necessary to warn them against preachers whose zeal (not always according to knowledge) leads them to assume a quasi-papal tone when instructing their flock and to claim—doubtless in all good faith and with the best intentions—the 'Authority of the Catholic Church' for what are often nothing more than the private opinions of theologians. On the other hand, it should be remembered that theology is a *science*, and that criticism of the opinion of experts by ill-informed amateurs is foolish. The astronomers of the pre-Copernican period thought that the sun went round the earth, and the modern elementary school child knows

they were wrong, but the old astronomers could calculate eclipses, and the child cannot.

Putting aside, therefore, the question of authority for the present, let us examine the statements of the Œcumenical Creed in their order, and the obstacles, real and imaginary, which stand in the way of their general acceptance. The real difficulties belong for the most part to the moral category; the intellectual difficulties proceed either from imperfect apprehension of the alleged facts or defective reasoning. But by far the most formidable obstacle is the *spirit* of unbelief. 'There is no surer sign,' said a wise man, 'of a feeble mind and a corrupt heart than the (instinctive) tendency to deny.'[1] The Spirit of Evil in Goethe's 'Faust' is he 'who evermore denies.' True philosophy always seeks to *solve*; wisdom is the crucible into which all statements are poured and tested 'so as by fire.' The distinction may not be at first apparent, but an illustration will make it clear. Every assertion is, of course, a denial of its opposite, and it is in this sense we use the terms 'positive and negative' electricity. When Galileo said the earth went round the sun he denied *implicitly* that the sun went round the earth. But his statement was an explicit and positive one based on deductions from actual observation, whereas his adversaries *explicitly* denied its truth for personal reasons *implicit* in a false and mechanical conception of authority. It is contrary to every accepted canon of philosophy to deny explicitly any statement, however seemingly preposterous, unless it is self-contradictory (e.g. that there are such things as four-sided triangles). We need not believe that the planet Mars is inhabited by men with two heads and six legs apiece; but not even the fact that the assertion was made by an inmate of the lunatic asylum at Hanwell entitles us to deny it *explicitly* in our present state of knowledge regarding the planets, but only *implicitly* on the grounds that the statements of lunatics should not be taken seriously. It so happens that the planet Mars affords at the present time an illustration of a difference of opinion among men, not only sane, but expert. Mr. Lowell

[1] Lytton, *Zanoni*.

of the Yerkes Observatory, U.S.A., has made a large number of observations, extending over a lengthened period, of certain alleged markings on the surface of the planet, which indicate in his opinion an artificial origin. That opinion is not shared by Mr. Maunder of Greenwich, who holds that the markings, if they exist at all, are natural fissures resulting from the withdrawal of moisture, and that the alleged regularity springs from defective observation. The author makes no pretensions to decide which of these two experts is right; he wishes simply to call attention to the fact that, so far from denying the alleged discovery of indications that intelligent beings exist in the planet Mars, astronomers have shown the utmost eagerness to observe these markings for themselves, and that the objections to the 'canal' theory are of a highly technical nature based on researches in regard to surface temperature, etc. To attribute these objections to the spirit of incredulity would be absurd. There is no question of explicit denial. Should the 'canal' theory fail in the end to establish itself, it will be because it is plainly inconsistent with admitted facts resulting from surer methods, or more careful observation.

Another reason why the true philosophic attitude towards explicit assertions should be one of hospitality is because truth is many-sided. It may be said roughly that men are generally right in what they assert; it is when they begin to deny that they go wrong. It is related in an Oriental story that Adarçimoukha, king of Djambouli, sent a number of blind men into his stables to feel an elephant and come back and tell him what the animal most resembled. One passed his hands over its side, another clasped one of its legs in his arms, a third felt its trunk, and a fourth twisted its tail. 'An elephant,' said the first man, 'is a flat surface like the wall of your Majesty's palace.' 'Not surely like the wall, but one of the pillars,' said the second. 'But not nearly so thick or straight as a pillar,' said the trunk feeler; 'I should say an elephant resembled a water-hose.' 'Even that is too thick,' said the last man, 'an elephant is like a rope.' [1]

[1] Stanislas Jullien, *Contes et Apologues Indiennes.*

Let us supplement this story by adding two more blind men who stayed behind to adjudicate on the report of the four. The conclusion No. 5 came to was that, as the reports differed so essentially as to the shape of an elephant, he had serious doubts whether such an animal existed at all; but No. 6 said, 'It is evident, O King, that there is such a beast, for in the first place your Majesty would not have sent men to feel something that is not, and, in the second, each of the four men felt something. But everything hath parts which differ in shape from each other. It appears to me, therefore, that an elephant in each of its parts resembles a wall, a pillar, a water-hose and a rope. These parts which represent pillars probably support its body, the surface of which is flat like a wall, and from which the flexible parts depend like a rope or a water-hose.'

In this completer form the story may be viewed as a parable of the Protestant, the Agnostic and the Catholic attitude towards revealed truth. The first four men believed firmly in the elephant because they had actually felt it in part, but each took his own experience for the whole truth and denied the experiences of the other three. All four were probably shocked at No. 5's denial of the animal's existence, and regarded No. 6 as a man who required them to believe things outside of their experience. And yet the description of an elephant's shape given by No. 6, though inadequate, comes nearest to the truth. Even so, the Catholic Church 'militant here on earth,' though far from apprehending as yet the whole truth towards which she is being *guided* by the Holy Spirit (S. John xvi. 13), is constantly stretching out towards it, whereas the Protestant sects have entrenched themselves in various forms of negation which constitute their *raison d'être*. Protestantism is an irrational, illogical and, consequently, a debased form of the Christian religion. Irrational, because while it professes to acknowledge Christ as King it rebels against the laws of His kingdom on earth, which is the Catholic Church. Illogical, because while it professes to be guided by the New Testament it denies that the Church is visible, and a Monarchy, in order to justify schism, which

is therein enumerated as one of the works of the flesh and not of the Spirit. It is debased because it has exalted the pulpit above the altar, and has obscured the central doctrine of the Incarnation by a denial of the sacramental system by which we are brought into personal relations with the Word made Flesh.

We will now proceed to consider the Creed in detail.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BEING OF GOD

'I believe in one God.'—*The Œcumenical Creed.*

SINCE the days when the late Professor W. K. Clifford said there could be no God because there was no room for Him in the universe, Atheism as a creed, or non-creed, has become, in England at least, extremely rare. 'Agnosticism,' which has not only more respectable associations, but is also conveniently vague, has to a great extent taken its place. Most Agnostics admit there is a case for some kind of First Cause, and some will acknowledge that there is reason for thinking that it 'makes for righteousness,' but of this First Cause they allege that nothing further is, or can be, known.

There can be little doubt that much of the unbelief, unfortunately so common at the present day, is a reaction from the superstitious teachings of the past generation. Of the two, a confession of total ignorance about God is preferable to a creed which maintains His existence and at the same time denies His goodness. We have in mind the actual case of a child of 'Evangelical' parents who confessed to a sympathetic friend what she would not have dared tell her mother or her governess, viz. that she 'loved Jesus but hated God.' Children are often more logical than their elders, and this little victim of the Calvinistic heresy pushed it to its legitimate conclusion and cheerfully 'divided the Substance' of the Holy Trinity.

It is not too much to say that all forms of belief in God, save as a Trinity in Unity, are of the nature of idolatry,

whether the eidolon be a statue of Jupiter, or 'Humanity' with a big H, or an imaginary old man supposed in some vague and indefinite way to be everywhere. It was probably against this absurd figment that the 'Hall of Science' type of atheist protested forty years ago, and no wonder. We shall endeavour to show that 'whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith,' for it is the only form of belief in God that is possible in these days for rational and civilised men, and those who reject it do so at the peril of unreason. Atheism is mere folly, and Agnosticism obstinacy in the light of the Christian revelation. Let us examine it.

Belief in God can only take three forms—Polytheism, Pantheism, and Monotheism. Each of these forms by itself, and considered as exclusive of the other two, is unsatisfactory. Polytheism belongs to a former stage of intellectual development; Pantheism is a form of Atheism, for it takes the reflection for the reality which by implication it denies; while Monotheism may, on the one hand, become, as in Mohammedanism, grossly anthropomorphic, or, on the other, lend itself to intellectual refinements which result in its becoming 'defecated to a pure transparency.'[1] What then remains? The doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, which is alone capable of synthetising these apparently irreconcileable conceptions. The worship of the Divine Man satisfies the anthropomorphic instinct which differentiates religion from philosophy. The sacramental idea which is involved in the doctrine of the 'Word made Flesh' is essentially Pantheistic; while Polytheism, or the recognition of diversity in operation, is redeemed from the charge of idolatry when the principle laid down by S. Paul is admitted, that though there be gods many and lords many, yet (for us) there is but 'one God and one Lord'; that is, all secondary causes have their origin in the one Great Cause to whom alone supreme worship is due.[2]

[1] Herbert Spencer.

[2] 1 Cor. viii. 5. S. Chrysostom says, commenting on this passage, 'For it seems that there are *really* several gods.' See also De Mirville, *Des esprits*, vol. ii, p. 322.

Objections to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity range themselves under two heads—scriptural and intellectual. The former need not detain us. It may be admitted that in the Apostolic days of the Church it was not taught explicitly, but it can be easily proved that it was implicit in the Apostolic teaching in regard to the Person of our Lord. Theology was in its gestation period, and was not, properly speaking, born until the Revelation of the Word made Flesh came into contact with Greek thought.

To the intellectual objection that it is a contradiction in terms, the arguments by illustration to meet it, from S. Patrick and his trefoil downwards, are often ingenious, but not very convincing. The true reasoning is parallel to the method of proof, which is the foundation of modern mathematical science as contained in the celebrated 'lemma' with which Newton opens his 'Principia.' Newton's method of dealing with prime and ultimate ratios may be said to establish the principle of contradiction in terms in all questions dealing with the relations of the finite to the infinite.

It cannot therefore be seriously urged as an objection to the doctrine of the Three in One that it would seem to involve a contradiction in terms. It would be strange if it did not, seeing that it is a revelation of the Infinite to finite minds, and the only one which answers to the test that it shall fulfil the conditions required for a rational monotheism. For be it noted that, starting from the monotheistic principle, we are confronted with a difficulty at the outset. We are obliged to conceive of the Supreme God on the one hand as Infinite, and on the other as having a definite relation to the created universe which exists in time and space, a relation in which the materials for co-ordination are wanting. Moreover, creation involves intention, desire, thought, work; and these are properties that imply limitation, and therefore belong to finite beings. In ancient times this was for long regarded as an insoluble problem. To the question how came the gods themselves to be there was but one answer, *Moira*, or Fate, a blind and mysterious agency of which the only thing that

could be predicated was that it was irresistible. In no intelligible sense, however, could it be said to be the Cause of the Universe—for, if the effect be 'the unfoldment of the Cause in time,' there could be no unfoldment of a metaphysical abstraction, or any imaginable link between it and the phenomenal universe.

To the solution of this problem of ultimates the sages of ancient Greece applied themselves with but little success until about 600 B.C., when an important contribution towards it was made by a man named Pythagoras, an Ionian Greek who had travelled in the East, and was familiar with the esoteric methods applied in India to the problems of life and mind. He maintained (i) that the archetypes of all forms have their origin in Number, which is the principle (ἀρχή), and consequently the cause, of all that is; and (ii) that, since Number is by nature prior to all things, the elements (στοιχεῖα) of numbers are the elements of things, and the essence of the cosmic Harmony, of which the earthly symbol is Music.

Now it is easy to say that Number, apart from things numbered, is as much a metaphysical abstraction as *Moira*, and must be relegated to the category of names as distinguished from things; but this is not so.[1] We are not justified in translating into terms of force the idea of finality implied in the word 'past,' and yet apart from the idea of force the word 'Fate' has no significance. But it does not follow that we have *no* ideas which, removed from the possible illusions of the senses and the understanding, may not be of the nature of *objective* truths, and form the basis of a philosophy of ultimate values. To this class the conception of Number certainly belongs, for it is the revelation of infinity through progress, and therefore *cannot be of the nature of a mental content.*

According to Pythagoras, One is the symbol of perfection, all imperfection being a departure from unity, whence it

[1] 'Thing'—an object of thought. Noun from the verb 'to think.'

strives to regain its state of perfection by *motion* towards infinity, which is again one with the infinitesimal.[1] It is the negation, and at the same time the *Cause*, of form, of which the elements (στοιχεῖα) of number are the essential conditions, form being the distinctive mark or quality of all *ex*-istent things. Now form is the perception of limits in space or time, and is always the expression, more or less adequate, of an idea. For example, musical form is the expression in time of a series of vibrations in the air much too rapid to leave the impression of number on the intellect, but none the less rigidly limited, for, theoretically, it would be possible to translate it into mathematical terms. In the same way, the rough block of marble is merely a convenient shape to contain the figure in the mind of the sculptor, which he proceeds to reveal by chipping away the stone outside the limits of the creative idea.

The profundity of the Pythagorean theory of origins becomes apparent when we compare it with the attempts of other philosophers to account for the existence of the phenomenal universe. Even Plato could not rise beyond the conception of a Divine Idea which is essentially anthropomorphic, and consequently limited, whereas Pythagoras regarded mind itself as a phenomenon—the peculiar manifestation of an essential series of elements in the developing process from Infinity, or the One, to that particular aspect of the Many which has the promise and potency of giving birth to other determinate aspects of progressively lower and lower series. He may therefore be said to have established on a rational basis the connexion between God in His essential

[1] 'How,' it may be said, 'can motion be predicated of abstract ideas'? In this way: our conceptions of force on the physical plane arise from motion, and motion is that which increases or diminishes the distance between one object and another. Now, as distance is a term which can be predicated of abstract ideas—the distance between love and hate for example—we may speak of that which increases or diminishes the distance between numbers as force on the psychic plane.

aspect of the Infinite and His manifestation *in time* as the Creator of all things.[1]

If God be One and Infinite, and Number the revelation of Infinity through progress, it may be fairly claimed for Pythagoras that he was the first to reveal Him to the human intellect as the unconditioned Cause of all things, number included, for He is the One from Whom all things proceed. The importance of symbolism in this connexion is apparent. It has been well said that the intellect runs wild without the aid of external symbols to mark out and steady its course, but *with* the aid of symbols it advances with precision and effect.[2] It is only by means of a symbol that the Deity in His aspect of the Infinite can be presented to the human intellect, and the Pythagorean symbol may therefore be said to establish the monotheistic principle distinguishing it from Pantheism *precisely* and *effectually*.

So far, then, as the Mystery of the Godhead is capable of being stated in intellectual terms there is nothing irrational in the doctrine of the Three-in-One, for it is, as we shall see, the idea of limitation reduced to its lowest terms. The Mystery itself consists in this limitation, which we will now consider.

[1] We must be careful to distinguish between the teaching of Pythagoras and that of the Pythagoreans. Of the philosopher himself little is known, and that chiefly through Aristotle, who only mentions his name as the founder of the *Pythagorean Brotherhood*, which would seem to have been a secret society, Orphic in origin and character. Most of the developments, to which he always refers as the 'doctrines of the *Pythagoreans*,' may be traced to Philolaus, who was probably responsible for the 'Music of the Spheres' and other fanciful conceptions usually identified with the teaching of Pythagoras himself. The reasonings which led to this and other conclusions were afterwards challenged by Abu-el-Faraj (Abulfaragius), the Arabic philosopher who flourished in the ninth century of our era. Unfortunately, we are dependent on fragments of Latin translations of his great historical work, so that it is impossible to adjudicate between the respective merits of the Omayad and Pythagorean dialectic.

[2] Newman, *Grammar of Assent*.

## CHAPTER III

### THE HOLY TRINITY

'The Father Almighty,[1] Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible . . .

'One Lord Jesus Christ . . .

'The Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father (and the Son).'—*The Œcumenical Creed.*

'He that loveth not knoweth not God, for GOD IS LOVE.'
1 S. John iv. 8.

A MYSTERY is a truth which cannot be fully, but only partially, apprehended by the intellect, and requires for its full apprehension the development of a higher faculty.

The answer to the question 'Is God knowable?' depends upon whether we have the faculties for knowing Him. This is true of all kinds of knowledge. Every normal human being has faculties for apprehending the outer world of sense, and they may be cultivated or neglected, as we read in our youth in the well-known story of 'Eyes and no Eyes, or the Art of Seeing,' by Mrs. Barbauld. Similarly, we all have faculties different from these, which enable us to discover the truths about abstract relations such as number, position, and motion. These faculties are highly developed in those who have cultivated the science of mathematics, and even the feeble-minded possess the rudiments of them. But there are large tracts of experience which, in their tests of certainty, are absolutely impatient of the kind of verifications indispensable in sensible and mathematical proof. We may believe firmly that a given

[1] *παντοκράτωρ.* More properly 'All Ruler' or Head of All.

man is incapable of a dishonourable action; we may believe in the love of parent, wife, or child without requiring any such verifications, and, indeed, would regard the demand for them as an impertinence. We call this 'personal' knowledge. Can we have a personal knowledge of God? We cannot do better than reply in the words of the late Dean Church. 'The question whether there is such a faculty in the human soul for knowing its Maker and God, knowing Him though flesh and blood can never see Him—knowing Him though the questioning intellect loses itself in the thought of Him . . . finds its answer in the Book of Psalms. In the Psalms is the evidence of that faculty, and that with it man has not worked in vain. The Book of Psalms is like the fact and the production, by the existence and exercise of a faculty in man's nature, of vast results, such as a great literature, a great school of painting, a great body of music. If it is not a proof and example of this power of knowing, I cannot imagine what a proof can be. There can be no question that in this respect the Psalms are unique.' The same writer says, 'Who would think of pouring out his heart to the Indra of the Vedas; who would dream of being athirst for the Father Zeus of Homer, or longing after the Jupiter, though styled the "Best and Greatest," of the Roman Capitol?'[1] And, we may add, how is it possible to adore and venerate the Ineffable One of Pythagoras which is the Cause of All, or even the Supreme Being of Xenophanes of Colophon?

> One God, of all beings divine and human
> the greatest,
> Neither in body or spirit like unto mortals.[2]

It was this unlikeness to mortals which, in the Gentile world under the Old Dispensation, constituted the great gulf between the lofty conceptions of the philosophers and the superstitious cults of the vulgar, which arose out of the needs

[1] R. W. Church, *The Sacred Poetry of Ancient Religions.*

[2] Εἷς θεὸς ἔν τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισι μέγιστος
Οὔτε δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὁμοίϊος οὔτε νόημα.
Fragment i, Ed. Kürsten.

of humanity for an object of worship, and took shape in polytheism. When, as was inevitable, these beliefs decayed with the growth of intelligence in the masses, the whole civilised world found itself without God and without hope. This was the state of things when the Roman Empire had reached the zenith of its glory under Augustus Cæsar.

Suddenly a great sign appeared, but it came 'without observation.' In a remote province of that empire, to obscure parents of the humblest class, a Man was born who claimed to be *in His own Person* the Revelation of God. Now, whatever opinions may be held as to the validity of this claim, it will not be denied that the appearance of this Man marked the close of one intellectual epoch and the beginning of another. Moreover, it has been found impossible to ignore it. The most 'liberal' of modern thinkers shrink from charging with audacious imposture the founder of an ethical system which compels their admiration, and whose life was the highest recorded manifestation of the religious ideal. Accordingly the ingenuity of those who profess themselves unable to accept His claims to Divinity has been taxed to the utmost in their endeavours to explain them away. That He was a great moral teacher no one denies, but that His Person has 'a metaphysical and *cosmical* significance' [1] is an idea repugnant to an age so impatient of the supernatural as our own. But it has to be taken into account, and the interest of modern physical inquiries into the laws of the Kosmos, or the origin of man, is immediately heightened when the Person of Christ is suspected to have a bearing, however indirect, upon these mysteries.

It was hardly to be expected of the contemporaries of our Lord—even of His disciples and most intimate friends—that they could take the measure of His greatness as a man among men. The principle holds good of all kinds of greatness that distance in time or space is required for its apprehension. It has been said that it took 120 years to discovre Shakespeare, and it is well known that Mont Blanc cannot be recognised as higher than some other peaks at a less distance

[1] Martensen, *Christl. Dogm.*, sec. 128.

than 60 miles. But there was one exception to this rule among the disciples of Christ, and it was a significant one. To the disciple whom Jesus loved—S. John the Evangelist, himself called the Apostle of love—was vouchsafed, at the end of a life prolonged far beyond the lives of his apostolic brethren, the revelation that when first presented to him and them they had failed to grasp.[1]

Much has been said and written concerning the 'Privilege of Peter,' to whom was given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven as a reward for his confession that Jesus was the long-expected Messiah, and who unlocked that Kingdom for the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, and shortly afterwards for the Gentiles in the person of Cornelius the Centurion. But, great as was that privilege, it was yet an earthly one, commensurate with the nature of the special revelation vouchsafed to him. We never hear of the privilege of John, and yet it was he who in one simple but tremendous sentence—'GOD IS LOVE'—unlocked the Mystery of the Universe and solved the problem of the ages.

There has never been, so far as the writer is aware, any serious attempt to formulate a philosophy of Love, or to account for its origin. Even Plato is content with describing its varieties of form, and it is this which has caused him to be generally regarded as the great authority on the subject; but of its origin and inmost essence he confesses himself frankly ignorant, save that it is of the nature of an almost infinite series of manifestations in the external world, of a mysterious principle in the region of the 'Ideal.'[2] He does not seem to have recognised that it is the greatest of all paradoxes, for it gathers up into itself the principles of life and death. A unity, it can only manifest in duality, by means of which it

[1] S. John xiv. 8, 9.

[2] It is remarkable that the particular variety of 'love' which forms the staple commodity of novelists and playwrights in these days is dismissed by Plato in a very few words, as being too immature for serious notice. Ball-rooms and water-parties are modern institutions, and the other variety, which consists in philandering with married women, he would have been much surprised at hearing called 'Platonic.'

strives after a more perfect unity of self-manifestation. In proportion to its intensity it will, on occasion, exhibit a fierceness which may easily be mistaken for its opposite. It is not uncommon for a 'woman of the people' to beat—sometimes even cruelly beat—her child whose life she has just succeeded in saving at the risk of her own by dragging it from beneath the feet of horses attached to a heavy van. Her maternal instinct, which is admitted by all to be one of the purest forms of love, is surer than that of the lady who, in the same circumstances, would probably scream or faint, and entirely forget, or neglect, to take that precaution against future similar contingencies which the poor woman takes automatically. The fierceness of love may also be seen in the passion of jealousy. We are accustomed to regard the jealousy that kills as an abnormal by-product of the lowest form of sexual passion in degraded human beings, but in the tragedy of Othello we find it exhibited in a noble character. It is too deeply seated in human nature to be hastily judged ignoble in itself, though we may deplore its outward effects. If, then, we take as our starting-point the revelation that the cause of all things is love, and at the same time recognise that love is a great paradox, containing within itself the seeds of life and death, we shall find ourselves in possession of a master-key to the mystery of creation.

The first thing that strikes us when we compare this new conception of the Divine Unity with the Pythagorean ἀρχή is that the idea of self-limitation is common to both. According to Pythagoras, the perfect One is revealed by departure from its perfection towards the Infinite, which is also One; for it is only by the limitation of its perfection that it can be manifest except to itself. In the same way, if God is Love it is a condition of His Being that the perfection of His essential Unity should become manifest, first towards Himself by limitation, and then in time and space to His creatures. The perfect expression of God, or Love, is therefore the Holy Trinity, which is the eternal generation of the Son through the eternal procession from the Father of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life; and these Three are One in the

same sense that Pythagoras maintained the finite, the infinite and the One to be, not separate existences, but respectively the substance of the things of which they are predicated, since number is the substance (or underlying principle), the ἀρχή of all things.[1]

That the doctrine of the Trinity should have been thus foreshadowed is a remarkable instance of the way in which, under the Old Dispensation, the world, Gentile as well as Jewish, was being prepared to receive the revelation of the Word made Flesh. In asserting that inspiration was not confined to one race and one period of the world's history, strange as it may seem to some modern Christians, we are only echoing the words of S. John, that our Lord was 'the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.'[2] Moreover, it is a truth to which several of the early Fathers bore witness. 'All that is well said and according to righteousness,' says Clement of Alexandria, 'they (the Gentiles) received from the fertilising influence of the Logos, or the Divine Wisdom, which descended at the same time upon the Jews, giving them the Law and the prophets, and upon the Gentiles, giving them philosophy.'[3] Clement holds that the Law was given to the Jews and philosophy to the Gentiles *until the Advent of our Lord*; and elsewhere he attributes to philosophy the office of purifying and preparing the soul for the reception of the Christian Faith. 'I know no difference,' he says in another place, 'between what man discovers and what God reveals.'[4] This view is remarkable and worth serious attention. Inspiration is the quickening of the spirit of man by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, enabling him to discover truths pertaining to the Spiritual universe which rules the world through the medium of ideas. If we recognise this we shall understand why it was that the Christian Faith first grew up to strength and shape in a Greek atmosphere; first showed its power of assimilating and reconciling to itself other forms of thought. Greeks were the

[1] αὐτὸ τὸ ἄπειρον, καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἓν, οὐσίαν εἶναι ταύτην. Aristotle, *Met.*, bk. i. ch. v.

[2] S. John i. 9. [3] *Strom.*, vi. sec. 8. [4] *Pæd.*, bk. i.

first to take in the meaning and measure of the amazing and eventful announcement that the Divine Logos had taken a human shape. But not all believed. To many the announcement was 'foolishness,' for they could not recognise the desire of the whole earth, in whom everything is gathered up that can make human nature what it ought to be, in the 'form of a servant.' But 'as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.'[1] The wisdom of this world is darkness, and the darkness comprehended not the True Light—or the Divine Wisdom.

[1] S. John i. 12.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE INCARNATION

'Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven . . . And was made man.'—*The Œcumenical Creed.*

'He came unto his own, and his own received him not.'

S. John i. 11.

THAT God is Love is, as we have seen, a key to the Mystery of the Kosmos. Love is the Cause, the created universe the effect, for the effect is the unfoldment of the cause in time. Creation is therefore finite, but the primordial limitation by which the One becomes Three is not *in* time but the *Cause* of time, for it is a principle inherent in the Divine Essence. The very nature of love involves three categories—the subject, the object, and that which unites them. This is the Mystery of the Trinity, and it has been revealed to us by the Divine Word in the form of a man. Now a mystery, as we have said, is a truth which can only be partially apprehended by the intellect and must be accepted, if at all, by a higher faculty. A finite series, for example, however large—say a million raised to its own power ($M^m$ or even $M^z$)—is at once perceived to be a possibility, but an infinite series is a mystery outside the laws of arithmetic, for we can neither add to it nor subtract from it. But though Number itself is a mystery, the mind can deal with numbers which are its revelation in time. It is thus that God has revealed Himself to man. He, the Infinite, emptied Himself of His glory and became finite for a period of time. He took upon Him our flesh and became a man in all points like unto us, sin only excepted. He

became ' obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross,' and in this perfect obedience of the Son the Love of the Father stood revealed. It is a revelation which man could never have discovered for himself. No man by searching can find out God, no amount of speculation can reach certainty as to what is God's purpose concerning man ; these may be guessed and disputed about, but cannot be known unless revealed.

Why, then, was it not immediately received ? The answer is because it was too large for the nation to whom it was given. All great truths are like seed—' Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it bringeth forth no fruit '—and here we have presented to us another aspect of the ineffable Mystery of the Incarnation. Germination is an *involutionary* process as regards the seed, but *evolutionary* in respect to the nascent plant. Creation is the unfoldment (evolution) of the Divine Idea in time ; but that the Word by Whom all things were made should take upon Himself the nature of man would seem to point towards a mysterious involutionary process in God Himself utterly inexplicable on any other theory than that Love contains within itself the principles of both life and death.

It was not to be expected of the disciples of the man Jesus of Nazareth that they should immediately recognise that ' in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' Their simple monotheism would not even rise to the conception that in seeing Him they had seen the Father. In that last discourse with them, our Lord seems, if we may say so with reverence, to recognise that He had expected too much, for He goes on to say, ' I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now ; howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth . . . and he will shew you things to come.' [1] Moreover, it was not until after His death and resurrection that the revelation could be said to be complete. What the disciples did recognise was that He was the long-expected Messiah who should deliver their nation, but the nature of this deliverance they

[1] S. John xvi. 12–13.

totally misconceived. Professor Hort has well said that ' to accept Jesus as the Christ without any adequate enlargement of what was included in the Messiahship could hardly fail to involve either limitation of His nature to the human sphere or, at most, a counting Him among the angels.' [1] We have said that in Apostolic times the doctrine of the Holy Trinity had not been formulated—that theology was in its gestation period. The revelation of the New Dispensation that was to be the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham was yet in the womb of Judaism and still a part of it, deriving its sustenance from the Law and the Prophets. When S. Paul preached to the Gentiles the babe leaped in the womb as did S. John the Baptist in his mother's at the Visitation. Still, it must be remembered that the Gentiles to whom S. Paul preached were not Pagans, but ' proselytes of the gate,' or foreigners who had been converted to monotheism and frequented the Temple and the Jewish synagogues ; men who ' feared God ' and refrained from idolatry, marriage within the forbidden degrees (fornication), from things strangled and from meat with the blood in it, but were uncircumcised, and, consequently, were not required to obey the Mosaic ceremonial law nor observe the traditions. On one occasion only did he address Pagans, viz. at Athens. Mr. Baring-Gould, in his extremely interesting and original ' Study of S. Paul,' says that ' Paul was stepping off a reef into deep water when, from addressing Jews, he spoke to Greeks ; and that there can be no disguising the fact that this defence of S. Paul was a failure and he himself felt that it was so. He wrote no epistle to the Athenians, never mentioned the Church, or the converts there, in either of his letters to the Corinthians, and on his next voyage he avoided Athens.' [2] With this exception he

[1] Hort, *Judaistic Christianity* (Macmillan, 1894), p. 125.

[2] Isbister & Co., 1897. While admitting this with certain reservations, we are quite unable to agree with Mr. Baring-Gould that S. Paul, ' never having received a philosophic education . . . had not the discipline of mind acquired by education, other than in the rabbinic schools, to think out a complete system of theology ' (p. 409). It does not seem to have occurred to him that the Apostle may have acquired this discipline and education during his three years' sojourn in Arabia,

confined his preaching to those who accepted the true God, and believed that He had promised a Messiah sprung from the seed of David who should reign over both Jews and Gentiles and make of the Jewish Church the Church of the whole world. 'It was a Cæsarean process [in Mr. Baring-Gould's words] the disengagement of Christianity from the womb of Judaism.' The operation was successfully performed by S. Paul, and, to continue the metaphor, the constitution of the mother never recovered its vigour, and her death took place within a very few years after the surgeon's own, viz. A.D. 71, when the Temple was destroyed and, later, the Holy City razed to its foundations, and the site sown with salt.

The time had now come for the Church, or the Kingdom of God, to manifest itself to the world or the kingdom of Satan. The 'world' is human society as it organises itself for its own purposes of pleasure and profit without regard to God and His laws, and its usurping monarch is Satan, the prince of this world, who was now to be 'judged,'[1] weighed in the balances and found wanting. Already in the lifetime of S. Paul the first heathen persecution of the Christians had begun. The nature of his 'appeal' to Cæsar, whether it had been heard and decided or not, was understood; and there was no difficulty in distinguishing the Christians from the Jews of the Synagogue, for they had now separate conventicles and separate worship on different days. S. Paul was one of the first to suffer. As a Roman citizen he was exempt from scourging and other indignities, but as an enemy to the State and servant of another King he was beheaded.

Such was the situation at the end of the period covered by the 'Acts of the Apostles.' The 'gospel,' or the 'good

whither he repaired immediately after his conversion and baptism. There were other than Greek systems of philosophy, and other methods of acquiring knowledge than by 'conferring with flesh and blood' (Gal. i. 16). It is extraordinary that Mr. Baring-Gould should regard the man who 'perceived *mysteries* behind the *facts* of Christ's life and *these he suggested*' as a person of 'limited intellectual capacities and miserable (!) education' (p. 336).

[1] S. John xvi. 11.

news ' that the Messiah, or Saviour of the world, had at length arrived, had been preached to the Jews throughout the Roman Empire, but they had for the most part rejected it. The Christian Church was composed chiefly of Gentiles, but of a particular class, loosely attached to the Synagogue and known as ' proselytes of the gate.' [1]

Throughout the empire creeds were in a state of solution : the gods of Olympus had become discredited, and their worship had been superseded in many places by foreign deities, such as Isis, the Ephesian Diana, Mithras, etc. To each and every such cult the State authorities extended the utmost hospitality and toleration, and the cultus of the emperors co-ordinated the religions of the various provinces into something approximating to a single hierarchy. The Emperor stood for Providence ; he represented the majesty, the wisdom, the beneficent power of Rome ; he was in many cases actually represented in different parts of the empire as an incarnation of the gods worshipped in that district—the Zeus Sarasios of Tralles, the Men of Juliopolis, the Zeus Olympios of the Greeks in general.[2] This claim was admitted by all save the Jews, whose refusal was attributed to their sullen and cantankerous disposition rather than to any expectation of a conquering Messiah whom the emperors felt themselves quite capable of dealing with should he appear. Jewish monotheism was regarded merely as an eccentricity consonant with their other unsocial peculiarities, but it appealed to a certain class, men who were repelled by the rites, often obscene, of the prevalent idolatries and attracted by the superior purity of the religion of Jehovah. But their attachment to the Synagogue, as has been said, was loose, and the teaching of S. Paul in regard to the equality in Christ of the circumcised and uncircumcised resulted in a final severance. The Christian Church was now born, and its afterbirth, the Judaisers of the earliest period of Christian history who insisted on circumcision for all Christians, pass into the Ebionites of the second century, who rejected the

[1] *Vide supra.*

[2] Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire.*

Eternal Sonship. But in the Church were 'not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble.' [1]

At this period the attitude of the government officials, and the educated classes generally, towards the new religion was in strong contrast to that which they adopted later. It was one of curiosity and intelligent interest in the new doctrine. This curiosity was in the air at the time throughout the Roman Empire, and especially in its eastern portion. Already, during the lifetime of S. Paul, it had attracted the attention of a class of thinkers who were neither pagans nor Jews but occupied themselves with problems concerning the relations of the finite to the infinite, which they professed to solve in the light of a special knowledge. This knowledge came originally from Persia and India, and claimed to be the accumulated result of discoveries by esoteric methods in the region of unconditioned causes to which the unaided intellect cannot attain, these methods requiring the development of faculties latent in the majority of men. Its professors were called 'gnostics,' or knowing ones (γνῶσις, knowledge), by Western thinkers, from whom they differed radically. That S. Paul was himself a gnostic (in this sense) admits of no doubt. His frequent references to the 'hidden things of God,' to the orders in the angelic hierarchy, such expressions as 'I have fed you with milk for babes' and 'behold I shew you a mystery'; his personification of height and depth (Rom. viii. 39); together with certain other indications, not so apparent, but easily recognisable by Initiates, stamp him as one of themselves. He was probably initiated in Arabia, whither he retired immediately after his conversion and baptism (Gal. i. 17), in order to prepare himself for giving to the world the special revelation to which he was 'called from his mother's womb.' It is only, however, in his later epistles, written from Rome, that he makes any direct reference to this kind of knowledge. To the Corinthians, for example, he says, 'We write none other things unto you than what ye read or acknowledge' (1 Cor. i. 13), i.e. proofs that Jesus was the Messiah drawn from the Law and the Prophets. It was after he had

[1] 1 Cor. i. 26.

left his converts in Asia that 'certain men crept in unawares, teaching strange (i.e. foreign) doctrine.'

The systems of Gnosticism were various, all of them referable to two fixed historical centres, Syria and Egypt; hence there was a marked difference between the Syrian and Alexandrian gnosis, the former being characterised by a predominance of Dualism, the latter of Pantheism. Both were defective and required to be interpreted in the light of the new revelation of the Word made Flesh. It was the Syrian variety that occasioned the chief trouble. The 'oppositions of science falsely so-called' (ψευδονύμου γνώσεως), to which S. Paul refers contemptuously in his first epistle to Timothy as 'vain babblings,' probably originated in the attempts of amateurs to identify the 'Demiurge,' or world-builder, with our Lord before His Incarnation. This was particularly offensive, for the Sabæan Demiurge was regarded as belonging to the evil principle of matter (ὕλη) and in opposition to the Supreme or Infinite God. For the same reason he exhorts Timothy to 'give no heed to the endless genealogies (of emanations) which make for 'questions' rather than 'godly edifying' and spring from the same tainted source. Moreover, these 'endless genealogies,' which had a serious meaning for experts, were the stock-in-trade of the amateur gnostic, and S. Paul regarded them with the same kind of impatience as a modern occultist regards the chattering of young ladies and gentlemen about 'Karma' and the 'astral plane.'

For all that, the rise and spread of Gnosticism in the early Church was a phenomenon the importance of which it is impossible to exaggerate.

> 'In the contact of East and West,' says Professor Ramsay, 'originates the movement of history. The historical position of Christianity cannot be rightly understood except in relation to that immemorial meeting and conflict. . . . Christianity is the religion which associates East and West in a higher range of thought than either can reach alone, and tends to substitute a peaceful union for the war into which the essential difference of Asiatic

and European character too often leads the two continents. . . . There is no power except religion strong enough to modify both sufficiently to make a peaceful union possible : and there is no religion but Christianity which is wholly penetrated both with the European and with the Asiatic spirit—so penetrated that *many are sensitive only to one or the other*. Only a Divine origin is competent to explain the perfect union of Eastern and Western thought in this religion. . . . The new stage to which Christianity is moving, and in which it will be better understood than it has been by purely European thought, will be a synthesis of European and Asiatic nature and ideas.' [1]

It is therefore of the highest importance that we should endeavour to estimate at their true value ideas which, strange and unfamiliar as they appear to modern Englishmen and calculated rather to obscure than explain the Christian doctrine of the Word made Flesh, were unquestionably of the greatest service in bridging the intellectual gulf between Jewish and Gentile conceptions of the Christ and Saviour of the world. The Gnosis was the fruitful parent of heresies, but heresy is the test of truth, as S. Paul reminded the Corinthian Church, and only becomes a sin when persisted in after the truth has been made manifest.[2] 'Christianity,' says a writer in 'Lux Mundi,' 'is greater than its isolated interpreters or misinterpreters in any age. In the course of its long history it has accumulated answers to many an objection which they, in their ignorance, think new. In the confidence of its universal mission and the memory of its many victories, it still claims to be sympathetic, adequate, adaptable to the problems and perplexities of each successive age.' [3]

We have said that the attitude of the educated classes towards the new religion, now completely disentangled from Judaism, and at the same time claiming to be its legitimate

[1] Preface to *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1904).

[2] 1 Cor. xi. 19.

[3] 'The Religion of the Incarnation,' J. R. Illingworth.

developement, was one of intelligent curiosity. Of course, to large numbers of them it seemed preposterous that a crucified Jew should have risen from the dead, and established a claim to have become thereby the Saviour of the world, but the very magnitude of this claim caused the more thoughtful to inquire further. The prevailing tone in almost all the more serious minds of the period was a consciousness of the power of evil, a feeling of discord and dissatisfaction with the existing state of things, an aspiration for something beyond the limits of this earth, a longing after some new and higher order of things. Upon this feeling Christianity exerted quite a peculiar influence.[1] With the doctrine of the Logos cultured people were already familiar through Greek philosophy, and many of them had come into contact with the followers of the Persian sage Zoroaster through Mithraism, which cult was widely prevalent throughout the empire, especially in Egypt. Such persons could not fail to be impressed with the assertion that the Logos was no longer an abstract idea, but had manifested in human form, and that Mithras, the first-born of the Zervan-Akerene (lit. 'Boundless Time') or Supreme Being, the Mediator between the principles of Light and Darkness, suffering through the latter and triumphing through the former, hitherto worshipped through his symbol—fire—had actually materialised in the flesh and claimed to have fulfilled all these conditions in His own Person.[2] The most remarkable thing about the new religion was that, to Jew and Gentile alike, it came as a fulfilment and a reconciliation. Hitherto, there had been a great gulf between the lofty conceptions of God, in His aspect of the Infinite Supreme, and the tribal Jehovah—but, as in chemistry, two elements often refuse to combine until a third is introduced, when a new compound body is immediately formed, so the Greek philosophers found themselves called upon to recognise in the person of the

[1] Neander, *Eccles. Hist.*, sec. 4.

[2] Mithras was also called the Rock-born (πετρογένες), and the obelisks raised to his honour were symbols of the origin and refractive expansion of the sun's rays. S. Paul's veiled allusion to this name in 1 Cor. x. 4 would strike an Initiate at once.

Jewish Messiah the Incarnation of the Logos or the Divine Idea, and the Oriental sages the Demiurgus or world-builder. There was no real fusion as yet of Jewish and Greek thought, but each was learning to understand the other, and unconsciously preparing for the higher synthesis of Christian theology. But this fusion, while in process, produced much heat. The various so-called gnostic heresies, Docetism, Encratism, etc.—their name is legion—arose from a refusal to admit the conclusions that would logically follow from the doctrine of the Incarnation viewed from all sides.

In one respect the revelation of God in Christ was unique—His claim to be one with God was itself the revelation that God is Love. It was the failure to recognise the full significance of this spiritual truth that produced all this intellectual fermentation. The Gnostics frequently complained that they were called heretics and refused communion, although they fully concurred in the teaching of the Church.[1] But there was one point on which, without exception, they did not concur, viz. the equality of the baptised before God. They made a distinction between themselves, the πνευματικοί, or the 'illumined,' and the mass of their brethren, whom they called ψυχικοί, as possessing only a lower intelligence and unable, therefore, to receive the faith except as an aggregate of so many individual doctrines and precepts. Had the Church allowed room for such a distinction, she would have been false to the principle on which her very existence depended—that in Christ mankind is made one, even as He is One with the Father. It was perhaps for this reason that the Jesuit Möhler regarded Gnosticism as the precursor of Protestantism. Be that as it may, the Protestant distinction between the 'elect,' the 'converted,' the 'followers' of Christ, and the great mass of the baptised certainly belongs to the same order of ideas.

Like all heretics, the Gnostics failed to observe the *proportion* of the Faith. Many of their doctrines were condemned by the Church not so much because they were false in themselves as because they were stated in such a way as to

[1] Irenæus, *Adv. Haeres.* lib. iii. c. 15.

conflict with the fundamental principles of Christianity. It was impossible, on the one hand, to admit that the 'Word by whom all things were made' was the Demiurge of the Syrian school, for this being was represented as opposing matter to spirit, or, on the other, that the Alexandrian Demiurge was not born of the Virgin Mary, but descended on the man Jesus at baptism. This, however, was not to condemn the true Gnosis. The doctrine of Emanations is in no way inconsistent with the revelation of the Word made Flesh, or that the Divine Love became manifest through self-limitation. It is, on the contrary, an endeavour to present in an intelligible form the mysterious process by which the created universe came into being. By working backward from the revelation vouchsafed to us of God in the form of a man it traced creation in an orderly way to its source. 'The Wisdom of God,' said S. Bonaventura, 'when it first issued in creation, came not to us naked but clothed in the apparel of created things. And then when the same Wisdom would manifest to us Himself as the Son of God, He took on Him a garment of flesh and was seen of man.' The Incarnation was no isolated fact in history, but was the climax and fulfilment of a thousand converging lines of thought which, whatever their origin, had for their aim and end the satisfaction of that quenchless thirst after God which in poetry found its highest expression in the Book of Psalms.

## CHAPTER V

### THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

'The third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end.'—*The Œcumenical Creed.*

It is often said that Christianity is for all practical purposes the 'Sermon on the Mount'; that the supernatural element in the Gospels has been exalted at the expense of the moral; that whether our Lord worked miracles may or may not be true, but owing to lapse of time is incapable of proof or disproof and is, after all, really of no importance at the present day. Why cannot we rest content with the simple and yet lofty moral teaching of the Man of Nazareth and leave dogmatic theology alone? The jejunity of this argument one might think would be apparent to anyone reflecting for five minutes, but as large numbers of people require their thinking to be done for them the answer must be as clear as possible. For this reason, instead of replying in my own words, I take the liberty of conveying bodily a passage out of 'Lux Mundi.' Mr. Aubrey Moore, in his masterly essay on 'The Christian Doctrine of God,' has securely nailed to the counter this base coin purporting to issue from the mint of charity.

> 'Without denying [he says] what George Eliot called the right of the individual to general haziness, or asserting that every Christian must be a theologian, we may surely say that Christianity is bound to have a theology. . . . The protest against theology from the side of religion

looks modest and charitable enough until we remember that religious haziness is generally, if not always, the outcome of moral laziness; that it implies the neglect of a duty and the neglect of a gift—the duty of realising to the reason the revelation of Christ, and the gift of the Spirit of Truth to enable us to do it. . . . If Christianity had been content to be a moral religion, if it had abandoned all claim to rationality and had left Greek speculation alone, it must have accepted either the Gnostic division of territory, or recognised an internecine conflict between religion and philosophy. And it did neither, but, under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, Christian theology arose and claimed the reason of the ancient world. There was an intellectual preparation for the doctrine of the Trinity as there was a moral preparation for the doctrine of the Incarnation. As the Trinitarian doctrine took shape Christian teachers realised how the Christian, as opposed to the Jewish, idea of God not only held the truth of the Divine Unity against all polytheistic religions, but claimed reason on its side against all unitarian theories. . . . The remarkable thing is that in the numberless attempts to attack or defend, or find a substitute for Theism, the Christian or Trinitarian teaching about God rarely comes on the scene. Devout Christians have come to think of the doctrine of the Trinity, if not exactly as a distinct revelation, yet as a doctrine necessary for holding the Divinity of Christ without sacrificing the Unity of God. Ordinary people take it for granted that Trinitarianism is a sort of extra demand made on the Christian faith, and that the battle must be fought out on a unitarian basis. If unitarian theism can be defended it will then be possible to go further and accept the doctrine of the Trinity. It is natural that, when Christians take this ground, those who have ceased to be Christian suppose that though Christianity is no longer tenable they may still cling to 'Theism,' and even perhaps, under cover of that nebulous term, make an alliance, not only with Jews and Mohammedans, but

with at least the more religious representatives of pantheism. It is only our languid interest in speculation, or a philistine dislike of metaphysics, that makes such an unintelligent view possible. Unitarianism said its last word in the pre-Christian and early Christian period, and it failed, as it fails now, to save religion except at the cost of reason. So far from the doctrine of the Trinity being in Mr. Gladstone's unfortunate phrase 'the scaffolding of a purer theism,' non-Christian monotheism was the scaffolding through which already the outlines of the future building might be seen. For the modern world the Christian doctrine of God remains as the only safeguard in reason for a permanent theistic belief.' [1]

The doctrine of the Trinity, therefore, and the Divinity of our Lord stand or fall with each other, and accordingly rationalistic objections to the Resurrection and Ascension and the supernatural elements in the Gospel are illogical from any but an atheistic point of view.

The Resurrection of Christ from the tomb on the third day is the pledge and promise of His claim to be the Saviour of the world. It is difficult to understand how it can be reasonably denied, or even doubted, except on *a priori* grounds, which, whatever weight they may have carried a generation ago, do not commend themselves to the more enlightened reason of the twentieth century. No one doubts that Charles I. was beheaded at Whitehall on January 30, 1649, and the evidence for the Resurrection is at least as good. It depends on the testimony of a great number of eye-witnesses to the fact that He was taken from the Cross certainly dead, with a large spear wound in His side, and deposited on Good Friday evening in a tomb closely guarded and with a large stone at its mouth; that on the morning of Easter Day the tomb was found empty, and the same evening He suddenly appeared to His disciples who were sitting in a closed room, probably discussing among themselves certain alleged appearances in the morning and afternoon of that day. According

[1] *Lux Mundi*, 4th ed., pp. 89 *et seq.*

to S. Luke they were startled and terrified, and supposed that they had seen a spirit; upon which He invited them to handle Him; 'for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.' And if it be objected that the accounts of these apparitions in the Synoptic Gospels are second-hand and that the Gospel of S. John is not authentic, we have the testimony of S. Paul. That Paul wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians admits of no more doubt than that Milton wrote 'Paradise Lost'; it has never been called in question by any competent critic. In chapter xv. of that epistle he appeals not only to living witnesses of the Resurrection, who could be questioned, but to a similar experience in person, on which he founded his claim to be an apostle, the first qualification of which was to be an eye-witness that the Lord was no longer dead but alive.

Upon the truth or falsehood of this historical event hangs the whole question whether Jesus was God, and its importance may be gauged by the frantic efforts of unbelievers to throw discredit on it. The extraordinary gnostic heresy called 'Docetism' was the direct outcome of a false view of the Incarnation, which was not the 'conversion of the Godhead into flesh,' but the 'taking of the manhood into God.' This is not, as some have thought, a distinction without a difference, for if it were the former our Lord would have had a human father instead of being conceived without sin.[1] In that case He might have been the second Abraham, but not the second Adam. The Gnostics saw clearly that this would have been to stultify the whole 'scheme of salvation,' as it was afterwards called, but if, on the other hand, His body were human and really died on the Cross, He could not, they said, have been Himself truly God, for in the first century it was impossible for those who were believers in any sense to deny the *fact* of the Resurrection in the face of so many witnesses: one, at least—S. John the Evangelist—was alive in A.D. 90, and perhaps later. They found themselves thus confronted with a mystery to accept which would shatter into fragments, and dissolve into thin air, the imposing edifice of æons and emanations which they had laboriously constructed on a

[1] I.e. sin against Joseph, though, of course, against God also.

dualistic foundation. Rather than confess they had been mistaken in supposing that God was not All in all, but the 'Principle of Good' in eternal conflict with the 'Principle of Evil,' they endeavoured to cut the Gordian knot, and boldly denied that our Lord was Man as well as God. They maintained that the body which He derived from the Virgin Mary was not truly human but of the nature of an illusion, a simulacrum, as the only alternative to believing that God Himself became subject to the law of death, that through His death man might be delivered from that law. The Incarnation was the revelation of God, or Infinite Love, a Mystery insoluble by the profoundest γνῶσις.

It is certainly strange that one of the most valuable evidential arguments in favour of the Resurrection should be furnished not by the Orthodox but by heretics. The fantastic theory that our Lord's earthly body was illusory—held by certain of the gnostic sects and known as 'Docetism'—is at once a testimony to the *fact* of the Resurrection and an example of ingenuity in avoiding its logical consequences. To the Alexandrian, or Pantheistic Gnostics, the Resurrection of our Lord from the tomb presented no difficulty, but they deprived it of all meaning by maintaining that, while His body was human and no illusion, it was not the vehicle of a human personality, for the human was merged into the Divine, and became the vehicle of the Logos when the Holy Spirit descended on Him at Baptism. Later it was found necessary to deny the Personality of the Holy Spirit for the sake of consistency, and Macedonianism, as this heresy was called, finally crystallised into Monophysitism, which stultifies the purpose of the Incarnation by endeavouring to re-establish the great gulf between the Creature and the Creator which was bridged over when the Word became Flesh and dwelt among us. The important thing to note is that those who professed to believe in the new revelation of God in the Person of Christ Jesus, but were unable to equate its expression with their philosophic theories, found themselves compelled to explain away the *significance* of the Resurrection because they could not deny the *fact*.

Under the circumstances, we are surely justified in calling on all who in these days say that it is ' unscientific ' to believe that Christ rose from the dead to give a reason for the *unbelief* that is in them. There is nothing scientific in mere incredulity. That the phenomenon was unique in history is no reason for doubting it ; the Person who rose was unique, as is generally admitted, even by those who bracket the Holy Name with Socrates, Buddha and Confucius for their own purposes ; though none of these worthies ever claimed to be the Way, the Truth and the Life in their own persons. Buddha only professed to indicate the way, or *Path*, to Nirvana. Socrates as a lover of wisdom was continually engaged in trying to *elicit* the truth, and Confucius laid down maxims for leading a good life. Nor has belief in the Resurrection been affected one way or the other by any discoveries in physical science. It has received, for example, no such staggering blow as the Copernican system is supposed to have dealt to belief in the miracle of the Ascension into Heaven. The Resurrection can only be doubted or denied, we repeat, on *a priori* grounds, and its denial involves the incredible proposition that everything which has ennobled human life for the last two thousand years has sprung from a root of falsehood. Those who desire to maintain anything so monstrous should reverse the old saying ' *Credo quia impossibile,*' and take as their motto ' *Nego quia credibile.*'

Of the significance of the Resurrection, its promise and potency for all who believe, we shall treat later. It only remains to deal with the phrase ' According to the Scriptures,' which must not be supposed to have any reference to the accounts given of the Resurrection in the New Testament. The writings of the Evangelists and Apostles were never so designated in the early Church, nor was the expression ' It is written ' ever used in quoting from them. The ' Scriptures ' always meant the Law and the Prophets, together with the Jewish historical writings, both canonical and apocryphal. The allusion in this case is, of course, to the prophet Jonah. It was inserted into the Creed for a special purpose, and must be taken in connexion with another clause which states that

it was the Holy Ghost 'who spake by the Prophets.' The object was to emphasise the fact that, in the Person of our Blessed Lord, Jewish and Gentile conceptions of God find at once a fulfilment and a reconciliation. In Him the Jews were called upon to recognise the fulfilment of their destiny as a people chosen out of the world to be a witness to the Supreme God in His aspect of Righteous Sovereign, and the Gentiles to recognise in the Jewish Messiah the Incarnation of the Logos or Divine Idea by whom all things were made. It was necessary to enter a protest against the blasphemous doctrine current among certain of the gnostic sects that the Jehovah of the Old Testament belonged to the class of 'Demiurges,' or world builders, who, because they represented the negative or material principle in creation, were in eternal opposition to God, who is pure Spirit. It would hardly be too much to say that this false idea of an essential antagonism between matter and spirit, which is the key-note of nearly all religious systems other than Christianity, lies at the root of all the heresies, however varied their forms, that have sprung from the undisciplined human intellect. It connects Valentinus and Basilides with Mrs. Baker Eddy through the centuries that divide them. It has warped the judgment of Christians in all ages in this or that direction. In the early Church the profligacy of the surrounding heathen society provoked a reaction of an ascetic character in respect to the relations of the two sexes which, though perhaps unduly severe, was at first quite healthy, but in the second and third centuries came perilously near a denial of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. And in the nineteenth century the so-called 'Temperance Movement' produced individuals who, obsessed with the idea that wine is an evil thing in itself, propose to mutilate the Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood. To all such notions the Church has always opposed her own sane and sensible tradition, not only against heretics, but even her own doctors and theologians, such as Tertullian, when they have exhibited fanatical intolerance of lawful pleasures and pushed asceticism beyond orthodox limits. She has always permitted, and even encouraged, the practice of austerities in the

individual, but has ever sternly prohibited their imposition as a rule of life on ordinary Christians.

In the dogma we are now about to consider—the *bodily* Ascension of our Lord into Heaven—we shall do well to lay aside all preconceived ideas about matter and spirit being in antagonism to each other. Whatever they may be in *us*, the idea is quite inadmissible in relation to the Person of Christ, in whom the vital forces on every plane of consciousness worked together harmoniously.

* * * * * *

Hitherto, in all the events recounted by the Creed as having happened, we have seen that the miraculous element presents no insuperable difficulties that would justify an intelligent person in modern times from rejecting the evidence adduced in support of them. Abnormality is not a test of falsehood, but merely a call for evidence. The Resurrection was an abnormal event, but the evidence that it really did occur is overwhelming. The Virgin birth was abnormal, but those who say that it could not have happened only display their ignorance of modern researches into the phenomenon of fertilisation as the first step in reproduction.[1]

But when we come to the dogma of the bodily Ascension of our Lord into Heaven we are confronted with difficulties of a totally different character. The story would seem to be inseparable from a conception of the stellar Universe held in former times, but which we now know to be false, and it

[1] Dr. H. E. Ziegler of Jena said, in 1898, in connexion with certain forms of marine life, that there is evidence to show that ova incapable of developing without fertilisation in normal conditions may yet develop if subjected to an altered environment. We know that in the human organism the cause of growth in the cell nucleus is the segmentation of the centrosphere which accompanies magnetic conditions that determine the arrangement and grouping of the *chromosomes*, which, in their turn, give rise to further segmentation and fresh groupings. Normally this comes about through the fusion of the male and female pronuclei which constitutes the primitive germ cell, but it would be absurd to allege that in no other way could the magnetic conditions requisite for further developments be provided.

presents obstacles so serious as almost to justify our friends the ' Liberal ' theologians in treating the whole account as an allegory, in spite of the unbroken tradition in its favour, as the only alternative to rejecting it altogether. They have been much perturbed by calculations relative to the speed of a cannon ball and the distance of the sun from the earth, to say nothing of the nearest of the fixed stars. They shrink naturally from the extravagances involved in applying these calculations to the Miracle of the Ascension ; but, if they take refuge in the allegorical theory, they leave unexplained the fact that this was the last of a number of well authenticated accounts of post-Resurrection apparitions of our Lord in a *body* in all respects like the one deposited in the tomb, save that it possessed the extraordinary quality of suddenly appearing and disappearing in a way that first made His disciples think they had seen a ' spirit.' Unless we are prepared to maintain that these stories are fabulous, on merely *a priori* grounds, we must seek some explanation that will cover *all* the facts and not merely the phenomenon of our Lord's final disappearance from this ' visible diurnal sphere.'

In an inquiry of this kind it would be a great help if we could find anything parallel in modern times to the seeming breach of natural laws involved in the sudden appearance of our Lord, on at least two occasions, in a room where ' the doors were shut for fear of the Jews.' Now, strange as some may think it, belief in *apport*, or passage of material objects through closed doors, is quite common among the people who call themselves ' spiritualists,' and number many hundreds of thousands throughout the civilised world : by no means *all* credulous fools. And though the phenomenon is perhaps rarer than some of these would be ready to admit, it has yet been attested by a sufficient number of witnesses under crucial test conditions to justify belief in its occurrence.

The witness whose evidence, on the whole, carries the most weight is J. C. F. Zöllner, late Professor of Astro-Physics at the University of Leipzig. In conjunction with Professor Scheibner, a highly distinguished mathematician at the same

university, and W. H. Weber, who published an exhaustive work on Electro-dynamic measurement, and is known as the founder, together with his brother, of the doctrine of the law of ' Force Vibrations,' Dr. Zöllner conducted a number of experiments at his own house in Leipzig with the medium Slade, in order to ascertain whether the phenomenon described as ' the passage of matter through matter ' and alleged to be of frequent occurrence at spiritistic séances had any foundation in fact. He obtained extraordinary results under conditions which excluded any known methods whereby they might have been produced fraudulently, and embodied these results in Vol. III. of his ' Scientific Treatises ' on the possibility of a Fourth Dimension in Space. In the first two volumes Zöllner traces this hypothesis historically in the writings of some of the most eminent philosophers and mathematicians. The third volume, to which he gave the title of ' Transcendental Physics,' was translated in 1879 by Mr. C. C. Massey. It is an account of physical movements that require for their geometro-mathematical definition a four-dimensional system of co-ordinates. The translator, finding it impossible to disengage the facts from the scientific and metaphysical disquisitions in which they were involved, reprinted, by way of Introduction, Professor Crookes' review of Vol. I., in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, April, 1878. Some of the experiments indicated in Vol. I. are of a highly recondite and technical character, as, for example, the magnetic experiments which proved that, under the influences which invariably surrounded the medium, the molecular currents present in the interior of all bodies could be *turned*, which induced Zöllner to hope that he might succeed in converting dextro-rotatory tartaric into lævo-rotatory racemic acid. But for the ordinary reader the chief interest will lie in the phenomena described in Vol. III.—among others a knot tied in an endless cord of leather : this in a well-lighted room and under conditions in which all possibility of fraud on the part of the Medium was excluded. But perhaps the most extraordinary phenomenon related in this book, and the one bearing most directly on the question at issue, was the disap-

pearance and reappearance of a table at Leipzig in broad daylight.

'In the sitting of the following day, May 6th (1878), at a quarter-past eleven, by bright sunshine, I was to be witness, quite unexpectedly and unpreparedly, of a yet far more magnificent phenomenon of this kind (i.e. the disappearance and reappearance of a book).

'I had, as usual, taken my place with Slade at the card-table. Opposite to me stood . . . a small round table near the card-table, exactly in the position shown in the photograph (of Zöllner's room) upon Plate III. (see page 106), illustrating the further experiments described below. The height of the round table is 77 centimètres, the material of birchen-wood, and the weight of the whole table 4·5 kilogrammes. About a minute might have passed after Slade and I had sat down and laid our hands joined together on the table, when the round table began slowly to oscillate. . . . The oscillations became greater, and the whole table approaching the card-table laid itself under the latter, with its three feet turned towards me. Neither I nor, as it seemed, Mr. Slade, knew how the phenomenon would further develope, since during the space of a minute which now elapsed nothing whatever occurred. Slade was about to take slate and pencil to ask his "spirits" whether we had anything still to expect, when I wished to take a nearer view of the position of the round table lying, as I supposed, under the card-table. To my and Slade's great astonishment we found the space beneath the card-table *completely empty*, nor were we able to find in all the rest of the room that table which only a minute before was present to our senses. In the expectation of its reappearance we sat again at the card-table opposite that near which the round table had stood before. We might have sat about five or six minutes in intense expectation of what should come, when suddenly Slade again asserted he saw lights in the air. Although I, as usual, perceived nothing of the kind, I yet followed

involuntarily with my gaze the directions to which Slade turned his head, during all which time our hands remained constantly on the table linked together (*übereinander liegend*); under the table my left leg was almost continually touching Slade's right in its whole extent, which was quite without design, and owing to our proximity at the same corner of the table. Looking up in the air, eagerly and astonished, in different directions Slade asked me if I did not perceive the great lights. I answered decidedly in the negative; but as I turned my head following Slade's gaze up to the ceiling of the room behind my back, I suddenly observed, at a height of about five feet, the hitherto invisible table with its legs turned upwards very quickly *floating down in the air* upon the top of the card-table. Although we involuntarily drew back our heads sideways, Slade to the right and I to the left, to avoid injury from the falling table, yet we were both, before the round table had laid itself down on the top of the card-table, so violently struck on the side of the head that I felt the pain on the right of mine fully four hours after this occurrence, which took place about half-past eleven.' [1]

Now, incredible as this story may seem to those who, unfamiliar with the literature of 'Spiritualism,' are not aware that it is merely one of a vast number of similar recorded phenomena, it has been selected because the evidence for it is exceptionally good, being vouched for by a distinguished scientific man, in whose presence, and that of his equally distinguished friends, Professors Fechner, Weber, and Scheibner, similar events occurred. Zöllner's explanation of these apparent contradictions of the laws of the physical universe is that they are proofs of the existence of a region of space outside the sphere of our normal consciousness, but of which the higher mathematics afford us some glimpses. This theory

[1] *Transcendental Physics*, pp. 91 and 92, by Johann Carl Friedrich Zöllner. Translated from the German by Charles Carleton Massey. (W. H. Harrison, 33 Museum Street, London, W.C., 1880.)

he has elaborated in his first treatise ('Scientific Treatises,' Vol. I., *vide supra*), an abstract of which is given in Mr. Massey's 'Translation,' to which the reader is referred, and also to a contribution of his own to the subject in the form of an appendix entitled 'The Value of Testimony in Matters Extraordinary' (a Paper read before the Psychological Society of Great Britain on Thursday, June 6, 1878). It is a closely reasoned examination into the nature of evidence in relation to experience. It deals exhaustively with Hume's celebrated argument against miracles, and shows, not only how his principle of incredulity, if pushed to its logical consequences, would be fatal to all scientific progress, but how the late Mr. Babbage in the 'Ninth Bridgewater Treatise' worked out an elaborate mathematical refutation of it by a calculation of probabilities in relation to cumulative testimony; and he invites those who refuse to believe that the facts related in this book did really take place to impale themselves on either horn of the following dilemma: 'If the facts were possible, such evidence as we have been considering would prove them; if they were not possible such evidence would not exist.'

Now, if we consider the miracle of our Lord's Ascension into Heaven in the light of the explanation given by Zöllner to account for the phenomena of *apport*, as it is called, viz. the theory of a fourth-dimensional or super-space, we may dismiss from our minds all those difficulties that arise from the supposition that He continued to ascend in the same direction as when the 'cloud received Him out of their (the Apostles') sight.' If we apply to the problem of the Ascension the powerful solvent of the theory of a super-spatial region of existence, supported by a large number of well-attested facts, all these difficulties melt away, and we find it quite easy to believe that the Perfect Man, responding to the motions of the Holy Ghost the Lord and Giver of life, would adapt Himself to the laws of space consciousness in perfected humanity. And it must never be forgotten that the Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven of our Lord contain within themselves the promise and potency of a similar resurrection

and ascension for those who believe in and are joined to Him in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. 'Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming' (1 Cor. xv. 23). On the theory that we have been considering of a super-spatial consciousness, in which we ourselves will have a share, His Second Coming to judge both the quick and the dead when 'every eye shall see Him' presents no further difficulties.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

'And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father (and the Son), Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets.'—*The Œcumenical Creed.*

In dealing with the Mystery of the Holy Trinity we have seen that if God be the One and Infinite, and Number the revelation of infinity through progress, of which time is an essential element, the doctrine of the Three in One is the idea of self-limitation reduced to its lowest terms. In no other way conceivable to us could the Deity manifest Himself to His creatures, and that He should so manifest Himself is implied in the revelation that God is Love. The Father is the absolute Cause of all that is; the Son, eternally begotten, is the Cause of *time* and all that is conditioned by time, including the life of all created beings, for *in Him* is life, and He derives it from the Lord and Giver of life eternally proceeding from the Father. This was the original form of the Œcumenical Creed, and it is much to be regretted that it was ever tampered with. The addition of the words 'and the Son' (*Filioque*), for which certain Spanish bishops were first responsible in the year 589 in order to guard against Arianism, and subsequently accepted throughout the Western Church on Papal authority, has had the most deplorable results. No local Church, or group of Churches, no Patriarch—not even the Patriarch of Rome—has the right to alter either by addition or subtraction the Confession of Faith put forward

by the authority of a General Council and afterwards generally accepted. It is on this fundamental principle that the whole of Eastern Christendom takes its stand and claims for itself the title of Orthodox. It does not deny that the interpolation may be defended on theological grounds, or that there is a sense in which the Holy Spirit may be said to proceed from the Son, implied in the word πέμψω ('I will send,' S. John xv. 26), but that it is entirely different from the sense in which in the same verse He is said to proceed from the Father (ὃ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται). The very phrase 'double procession' involves a misunderstanding. There are two Greek words, πρόεσις and ἐκπόρευσις, for which the more meagre Latin has but one equivalent, '*processio*.' The former may be rendered in English as 'detachment' or 'throwing off'—a procession in time—whereas the latter implies 'pouring out' (as from a vessel), and it is in this sense that the Holy Spirit is eternally proceeding (ἐκπορευόμενον) from the Father, and being partaker of the Divine Essence is consubstantial with the Father and Son, together with whom He is worshipped and glorified—One God world without end (i.e. from the ages to the ages).

But though the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and is the cause of the eternally begotten Word, we being partakers of the life that is in the Son are partakers of His Spirit also in virtue of that union. 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth His Spirit into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father' (Gal. iv. 6). It is here that the Spirit may be said to proceed from the Son *in time*, for that union was conditional on our Lord's departure from earth. 'If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you' (S. John xvi. 7). We must be careful, however, not to interpret this saying as authorising the 'Double Procession,' for it must be read in the light of chap. xiv. 26, where it is clearly stated that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father who will send Him *in the name* of the Son (ὃ πέμψει ὁ πατὴρ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου) to Whom He has committed all authority and power in Heaven and in earth. The Spirit then proceeding (ἐκπορευόμενον) from

the Father is also the Spirit of the Son, and becomes the life of the Society which He founded—the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

'The best evidence for the truth of the Christian Revelation,' said Newman, 'is the existence of the Catholic Church.' The saying holds good *a fortiori* if we do not limit the term Catholic to the Churches of the Roman obedience, but extend it to the Churches of Eastern Christendom and those of the Anglican Communion, all of which have their roots embedded in history through the maintenance of the Apostolic Succession. The Catholic Church, though 'by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distrest,' is still the organ of the Holy Spirit though the instrument be out of tune and its chords jangled. Even in the chaos of Protestantism the Spirit may be said to move upon the face of the waters.

Now what is the Catholic Church? It is the Kingdom of God as opposed to the World, or the kingdom of Satan. The world is human society organised on the basis of government by force, ostensibly for the purpose of promoting the 'greatest good of the greatest number,' but really in order to secure for the intelligent and strong the fruits of the labour of the ignorant and weak. This is known as 'Civilisation.' There have been many types of civilisation, but perhaps the worst is the one with which we are the most familiar and is called 'Christian' civilisation. A generation ago the 'rulers of the darkness of this world'[1] had so blinded our spiritual vision that really worthy and otherwise sensible people actually believed it to be of Divine ordination. The late Mr. Spurgeon advised his congregation to 'make their money according to the laws of political economy and spend it according to the laws of Jesus Christ'; and the Rev. William Arthur, a Wesleyan minister, wrote a book to prove that our Lord was mistaken in supposing that it was not possible to serve both God and Mammon. It was called 'The Successful Merchant,' and was the biography of a man, born of 'poor but honest parents,' in whom the trading instinct was so abnormally developed that he became extremely rich, and

[1] Eph. vi. 12.

a celebrated chapel-builder. The book had an enormous circulation, and used to be presented to young men 'going out into the world' by pious friends, who exhorted them to 'go and do likewise.' It was, of course, admitted that 'Christian civilisation' involved certain evils, and that Messrs. Gradgrind and Bounderby were not exactly estimable persons, but as Mr. Broadbent told Mr. Keegan, 'some of these evils are absolutely necessary for the preservation of society, and others are encouraged only when the Tories are in office.'[1] We are not quite so self-complacent in these days. We do not regard Socialists as almost incredible blasphemers, flying in the face of a Divinely ordered state of things, even if we do not agree with them. Our eyes have been partially opened by experience, and Socialists and non-Socialists alike recognise that this 'order,' so far from being Divine, is more like established and endowed anarchy, and could not last for a week if not maintained by physical force in the background in the shape of the policeman and the soldier. Few of us, however, as yet, see clearly that it is the work of the Devil, who is the Prince of this world. As such it is doomed to destruction sooner or later by the Spirit of God operating through the Church, for it is essentially idolatrous and anti-Christian, being founded on the principle of competition—in other words, the 'coveteousness, which is idolatry,' or the worship of Mammon (Col. iii. 5). But war is a wonderful enlightener, it strips bare and illuminates what peace disguises or huddles away, and whatever else may come of the world-conflict which is still raging while these lines are being written, one thing is certain: it will scatter the mists of fear, ignorance, and prejudice, which have for so long obscured our vision and reveal in its true character the social system which is responsible for it.

The Church, then, which is the Kingdom of God, is and must be opposed to the World, which is the kingdom of Satan, and yet its members are in the world and mixed up with it. What form should this opposition take? It will be very instructive if we compare two answers to this question:

[1] *John Bull's Other Island*, Act IV. G. Bernard Shaw.

one by S. Paul, who was guided by the Spirit of God, and another by Mr. Bernard Shaw, one of the keenest intellects of the present day. In a letter to the *Daily News* replying to a criticism by the Rev. Morgan Gibbon of his play 'Androcles,' and entitled 'How Divines differ about Shaw,' he says :

> 'But of one thing I am absolutely certain ; and that is that nothing but mischief can be done by pretending that Mars and Mercury, Militarism and Commerce, are Christianity, or that the ladies and gentlemen who sit under Mr. Morgan Gibbon at Stamford Hill are Christians living in a Christian country. *The simple fact that they are not in prison proves that they are not Christians*, and it would be an enormous gain to intellectual clearness and honesty of soul if they would say so.'

From this it would appear that Mr. Shaw thinks it is the duty of Christians to oppose the world by physical force and get imprisoned in consequence, and that because they do not they are false to their profession. But it may be answered that his own Ferrovius was condemned as a passive resister and received into the Emperor's favour when he resisted evil actively. In the Preface to 'Androcles' he goes even further, and admits that 'revolutionary movements attract those who are not good enough for established institutions as well as those who are too good for them.'

Now what was S. Paul's attitude towards the civilisation of his day, which was not even nominally Christian, and though in some respects better, was in others even worse, than our own. 'The powers that be [i.e. the State officials and magistrates],' he writes, 'are ordained of God : whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. He [i.e. the 'power,' who was Cæsar] beareth not the sword in vain : *for he is a minister of God*, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.'[1] On the other hand, the Apostle considers it disgraceful for Christians to appeal to the civil courts to settle their disputes in 'things pertaining to this

[1] Rom. xiii. 1 to 4.

life.' Better even to 'suffer yourselves to be defrauded' than for the subjects of Christ to appeal against their fellow subjects in the courts of the kingdom of Satan.[1] It must be remembered that when S. Paul wrote these words there was as yet no persecution of Christians, as such, by the State, so that if any did get imprisoned, it was for conduct unworthy of those 'called to be saints.' He would have regarded Mr. Shaw's test as the height of absurdity. 'Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the casting down of strongholds.'[2] It was, indeed, the alarm occasioned by the casting down of these strongholds of the kingdom of Satan that gave rise to the persecution under the later Roman emperors. Christianity was seen to be making progress steadily among people of every rank, threatening to overthrow the religion of the State, and with it the whole framework of civil society which seemed closely interwoven with the former. Nothing remained, therefore, but to oppose the inward power by outward force.

What was this inward power? It was nothing less than the Spirit of God working in the members of His Church. God chose the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. The 'strongholds' of the kingdom of Satan, which the Church cast down, were the spiritual forces which constituted the vital principle that animated and held together the organism known as the old Roman Empire. Not that this was wholly evil; it had many admirable features and was, as has been said, in some respects superior to modern civilisation. It represented the triumph of law and order over the forces of anarchy, it destroyed piracy at sea, by the establishment of the *Pax Romana* tribal wars on land, and under it art, literature, and commerce flourished. But it was rotten at the core, being founded on slavery, which is a denial of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. It had to be destroyed to make way for the Kingdom of God, but so powerful was it that no external attack by physical force,

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 7. [2] 2 Cor. x. 3 and 4.

no intellectual demonstration of its essentially evil character, though neither of these was wanting, could shake its foundations which, like those of all great institutions, were spiritual. S. Paul well understood this, for he said 'We wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this world ['age' or 'world-period'— *τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου*], against spiritual wickedness in the super-celestial region.'[1] It is very unfortunate that these expressions, familiar as they are, should have ceased to have any definite meaning for the majority of modern Christians, whose dull incuriosity in regard to the spiritual region, its inhabitants and its laws is, in clergy and laity alike, truly deplorable. Principalities and Powers are understood in a vague way to be names for angels, but as the popular notion of an angel is a young woman in a white dress with a pair of goose wings attached to her shoulder blades, angels can hardly be expected to be taken seriously in these days, and it is consequently assumed that S. Paul was indulging in metaphorical language. It would lead us too far from our present subject to enter into details respecting the part played by the angelic host in the Divine economy. For fuller information the reader is referred to the appendix 'On the Nature and Ministry of the Angels'; suffice it to say at present that these expressions are not metaphorical, but denote ranks and groups of actual personalities in the spiritual, or, as S. Paul calls it, the 'celestial' region (*ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*).[2] Under the generic term 'angel' are included several ranks and two species—the angels of light and the angels of darkness, and it is with the latter that we 'wrestle' in co-operation with the former. Now the spiritual world is the region of causes, and the external world the region of effects. The Kingdom of God, or the Church, is an organism whose vital principle is the Spirit of God who, *essentially* One, *manifests* as a seven-fold plurality—the 'Powers' of Light. The usurping 'Prince' of this world is Satan, one of the 'Principalities'

[1] Eph. vi. 12.

[2] Perhaps the 'super-celestial' region would be a better translation as conveying the idea of super-space.

of darkness who derives his being from the Powers of Darkness together with the other ' Rulers of the darkness of this world ' (or age-period), and his kingdom derives its vitality from the spiritual forces, in organised revolt against the righteousness of God, who have established on this planet a righteousness of their own which we call ' civilisation.' The mischief began centuries and centuries ago. Civilisations rose and fell: some were long and dull, others brilliant but evanescent; but each and all contained within them the principle of death, for they were established in opposition to the Spirit of God, the Lord and Giver of life. But God never left the world without a witness to Himself. In ancient times He ' spake by the Prophets,' whom ' some they beat and some they stoned '; and finally He sent His only begotten Son in the likeness of sinful flesh but without sin. Him they crucified with wicked hands, but He rose again the third day, and established a Kingdom of His own in the midst of the kingdom of Satan for the purpose of destroying it from within. That society is the Catholic Church, and after He had ascended into Heaven He sent the Holy Ghost to dwell within its members. It is in co-operation with Him that we fight against the ' Rulers of the darkness of this world,' not with carnal weapons, but with the ' shield of faith,' the ' breastplate of righteousness ' (or ' justice,' δικαιοσύνη), and the ' sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God,' or the message which in every age He sends through the prophets.[1] Our duty is to follow His guidance, to watch and pray. ' Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all *perseverance* and supplication for all saints.'[2] It is not without significance that in the so-called Apostles' Creed the ' Communion of saints ' is coupled with belief in the Holy Ghost; the two, indeed, stand or fall together; for individual prayer, like all other individual effort, is only

[1] The original is ῥῆμα, not λόγος. The Logos of God was our Lord Himself. In classical Greek ῥῆμα was merely the equivalent of the Latin *verbum*, but in the New Testament it signifies a thing, and is best translated as ' message.'

[2] Eph. vi. 17.

effectual according to the measure of the personality in whom the Spirit dwells, whereas the united prayers of the whole Church are part of the machinery whereby the Universe is governed, and are an essential element in what is known as the Divine Providence. For prayer is the liberation of spiritual energy; it is capable of expression in terms of intellect and will, in the same way that will-power is a form of vital energy having a mechanical value and capable of being expressed physically in terms of motion. Now, the difference in the effects produced by a given quantity of energy on the physical and intellectual planes is apparent if we compare the value of a day's work by a bricklayer's labourer and a man of science. In the same way, those who are acquainted with the laws of psychical dynamics know that the work produced by a fixed amount of energy on the intellectual plane is, in turn, enormously inferior to that produced on the plane of spirit. In the Apostolic and sub-Apostolic period the amount of spiritual energy liberated by the prayers of the infant Church produced results truly marvellous when we consider how few, and from a worldly point of view how insignificant, were its members. That a handful of Jews, with the assistance of a few Gentile proselytes converted by their preaching, should have set in motion spiritual and intellectual forces which unified all current philosophies, changed the whole outlook of humanity, destroyed the State religion, and erected on its ruins the figure of the Crucified, is the most extraordinary phenomenon in history. It may be compared to the few pounds of muscular force which is exercised by the driver of a locomotive when he pulls his lever and sets free a certain amount of steam, the mechanical force of which is sufficient to put in motion a train weighing many tons, and drive it many miles an hour in the desired direction.

Why has this success not been maintained? The answer is simple. 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation.'[1] The Church, which is the army of the Kingdom of God, has not destroyed the kingdom of Satan, because it has ceased to co-operate for that purpose in the

[1] S. Matt. xii. 25.

'unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace and in righteousness of life.' It has been rent asunder by schism, and is in a state of confusion not unlike civil war. In place of 'the whole armour of God' we now put our trust in earthly weapons. We have thrown away the 'shield of faith' and cower behind the wall of authority, we have exchanged the breastplate of God's righteousness for the world's righteousness, we have allowed the sword of the Spirit to drop from our nerveless hands, and the prophets, or messengers from God, are to-day, for the most part, outside the Church. Has the Spirit of God, then, departed from the Church? God forbid! He is ever striving with its individual members. That the Church has not overcome the world is because we have not preserved its unity as the organ of the Spirit, and one of the surest signs that He has not departed is that this is coming to be recognised by all who profess and call themselves Christians. Of all the 'unfruitful works of darkness' the least fruitful in anything that is good is the spirit of schism. It poisons the springs of religion at their source, and produces a spiritual lassitude from which the whole of Christendom is suffering at the present day. Hitherto, in spite of every consideration why we should present a united front to the common enemy, we have refused to unite, and deliberately magnified every obstacle we can think of that stands in the way of reunion instead of trying to remove them—the 'Papal claims,' the 'right of private judgment,' the 'thin end of the wedge,' the 'dignity of national Churches,' the 'good old ways,' class distinctions, party politics—anything and everything before the 'Kingdom of God and His Righteousness.' But, thank God, we are gradually ceasing to 'glory in our shame.' We 'hope for that we see not and with patience wait for it, for the Spirit Himself helpeth our infirmities and ever maketh intercession for us.'[1]

[1] Rom. viii. 24, 26.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

'And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.'—*The Œcumenical Creed.*

The outward life of men in every age is moulded upon an inward life consisting of a framework of traditions, sentiments, and moral influences which direct their conduct, and maintain certain fundamental notions which they accept without discussion. Let the resistance of this social framework weaken, and ideas which could have had no force before will germinate and develop. Of such a character was the belief in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as a visible society of men and women of different nationalities, speaking various languages, but joined together in one communion and fellowship, and constituting in its entirety the Kingdom of God on earth. Into this society the appointed means of incorporation is by Holy Baptism, which is described in the Catechism of the Church of England as 'a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.' As the rite of circumcision admitted to the benefits of the Old Covenant, so Baptism is the admission to those of the New. 'Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid.' A man may profess and call himself a Christian, but if he refuses or neglects to be baptised he is outside the Covenant of Grace. Strangely enough, this dogma (or settled belief) is supposed by some to be the height of uncharity, and yet in secular affairs the same principle is generally admitted. A foreigner may live in England long enough to forget his own

language, he may pay rates and taxes, he may prefer England to any other country, but though he may sing 'God save the King' until he is hoarse, he cannot become an Englishman without applying for letters of naturalisation and taking a formal oath of allegiance to the Sovereign. All controversies about 'Baptismal Regeneration' resolve themselves ultimately into the question "Did our Lord, or did He not, found a society called by His name which has existed down to the present day?" To answer it in the negative is to slap history in the face. Extremes often meet, and if the late Cardinal Manning called the appeal to history 'heresy and treason,' the Protestant who declares that 'no man shall come between me and my God'—as if he would make private property even of the Deity—comes under the same condemnation.[1]

For a thousand years the Church of the Kingdom of God was undivided. This was the first 'Millennium' or reign of Christ on earth. It came to an end with the Consummation of the 'Great Schism' in the year 1054, when the Papal Legate placed the Bull of Excommunication on the High Altar of the Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Constantinople. By that time the Gospel, or the 'good news,' that Christ had established a new Kingdom of Righteousness, and that the kingdoms of this world were destined to become the kingdoms of God, had been everywhere proclaimed, extending to India, and even China. This period may be described as the end of the first campaign in the great war between Satan, the usurping Prince of this world, and its lawful Sovereign. The civilised world was becoming Christian, but meanwhile the Enemy, who had foreseen this result, had, by a masterly stroke of policy, succeeded in weakening civilisation itself by effecting a temporary arrest of normal historical development as a preparation for his great counter-attack. As S. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ, so the Emperor Con-

[1] The Rev. Percy Dearmer, in an admirable little tract on *Christianity and Socialism*, published by the Fabian Society, says: 'The teaching of the Lord's Prayer is that *every man* shall come between me and God. God will not even forgive us unless we forgive our debtors.'

stantine may be said to have prepared the way for Mohammed (the first Anti-Christ), by removing the seat of government from Rome on the Tiber to New Rome on the Bosphorus.

It is a curious fact that the course of civilisation, like the Sun, has always been from East to West. Dante probably had this in mind when he described the action of Constantine as 'turning the eagle against the course of heaven.' [1]

The dawn of civilisation was in Asia. It proceeded from the Mediterranean to Western Europe; in the sixteenth century it crossed the Atlantic. Three hundred years later it crossed the Pacific, and towards the end of the nineteenth century the result was apparent in the rise of Japan to the rank of a Great Power. The circle is now complete. What may be in store for mankind it is not easy to foresee, but there can be no doubt that the present world war marks the end of one historical epoch and the beginning of another, in which the conflict between old and new ideas of government, political, social, and religious, will have to be fought out, and everything seems to indicate that the battlefield will be the late Russian Empire where East and West meet.

The action of Constantine in 'turning the eagle against the course of heaven' was destined to have the most far-reaching consequences. It divided both Church and Empire into two portions, an Eastern and a Western, with conflicting interests. It paved the way for the Great Schism, and the Church, no longer able to present a united front to the Enemy, fell under the dominion of the Prince of this world, and from that time down to this day has presented the sad spectacle of a kingdom with a divided allegiance.

If this were an historical work, it would be a fascinating task to trace the course of this great campaign in the age-long war between the hosts of Light and Darkness which has lasted about 1200 years, and now shows signs of coming to an end with a victory, indeed, for the hosts of Light, but an indefinite period of unsettlement in the external world. For our present purpose, however, we must confine ourselves to a general

[1] 'Posciachè Constantin l'aquila volse
Contra il corso del cielo.'—*Par.* vi. 1.

survey of Christendom in modern times, and, in particular, endeavour to ascertain what steps must be taken to reunite in one visible communion and fellowship all who profess and call themselves Christians. The difficulties, great as they are, should not be regarded as insuperable. Even the claims of the Church of Rome to universal hegemony may be found capable of adjustment to altered conditions; for it is inconceivable that the Churches of France and Belgium after the War should not seriously reconsider (i) whether the Papal claims, especially as regards modern developments, can stand the test of history; and (ii) whether the particular claims of Pius X. and Benedict XV. to be 'Vicars of Christ on earth' have not been worn rather thin by the late War.

* * * * * *

Those who 'profess and call themselves Christians' may be roughly divided into three groups, known in popular language as Greeks, Romans, and Protestants, as in ethnology we speak of Aryan, Semitic, and Turanian peoples; the last being merely a convenient term to denote those who are neither Aryan nor Semitic, and including types as widely different as negroes and Chinese. In the same way the word Protestant is made to cover religious beliefs so diverse as those of the late Mr. Charles Spurgeon, Dr. Pusey, and Dr. Martineau. The division which we propose to make for our present purpose is into Catholics and non-Catholics. It has the advantage, moreover, of being an obvious one, seeing that it is not only apparent to the observer in the mode of conducting public worship, but is based on history itself. But, unfortunately, one section of the Catholic Church claims to be the Catholic Church alone, and has so far succeeded in monopolising the title as to secure its adoption by tacit acquiescence on the part of others. Nowhere but in England is the prefix 'Roman' in common use, and even here by no means universally, while in Eastern Orthodox countries the term 'Greek Catholic' is actually used to denote certain schismatic bodies which, having submitted to Papal authority, have been allowed to retain their Orthodox ritual and customs

(e.g. a married clergy, and leavened bread in the Holy Eucharist). We will deal with this claim presently.

It must be clearly understood, therefore, that by Catholics we mean those who adhere to the beliefs and customs generally accepted by the Church during the first thousand years of its existence. We do not, of course, mean such things as the geocentric theory of the Universe (though even this may be true from a spiritual, while false from a *physical*, point of view); and by non-Catholics those who consider themselves at liberty to disregard or deny them. We refer to such fundamental doctrines as (i) that the Church is a visible society of men and women built on the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets with a threefold ministry, consisting of Apostles (afterwards Bishops, to whom the Apostles committed the authority they derived from our Lord Himself), Presbyters *ordained* by them to be ministers of the Word and Sacraments, and Deacons *appointed* by them as assistant ministers; (ii) that the entrance to this society is by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; (iii) that our Lord is present under the forms of bread and wine in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, and is offered as a perpetual memorial (*ἀνάμνησις*) by the Church as a 'full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world'; (iv) that our Lord having conquered death by His Resurrection, we are in communion with those who have departed, and may pray for them and seek their prayers for ourselves; (v) that no Church, or group of Churches, has the right to alter by addition or subtraction any article of belief which has received the authority of a General Council, and accepted by the whole body of the faithful; (vi) that the authority of the Church resides in the totality of the episcopate who, assembled in Council, are the chosen instruments of the Holy Spirit to guide the Church, as promised into 'all truth'[1]; (vii) 'The

[1] The Roman Catholics centre this gift of authority in one Bishop only, whom they regard as the Vicar of Christ on earth, and consequently infallible, and assert that it is not only not contained in, but strictly separated from, his hierarchical functions.

Power of the Keys,' or the authority of the Church over the *conduct* of its members. This was committed by our Lord to His Apostles in the words, 'Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained' (S. John xx. 23), and by them transmitted to their descendants the Bishops. It is commonly supposed that this privilege refers to the absolution given on confession of sin and repentance, but it covers a much wider field. The Church, on the advice of S. Paul, remitted at a very early period the obligation to observe Sabbaths and other feasts, and to abstain from certain meats; in other words, it declared that the neglect of these regulations was no sin. In modern times it has remitted, by a general consensus of opinion, the sin of usury, or interest for money lent, which in the Middle Ages was retained on the ground that, as Jew was forbidden to take interest from Jew, so it was unlawful for Christian to take interest from Christian. It is not unlikely that this retention may be reimposed when, as a result of the Great War, the social and economic conditions which now prevail shall have passed away—let us hope for ever. It is also possible that the Church may see her way to relax, under certain circumstances, the rule of the indissolubility of the marriage tie, hitherto, for good reasons, enforced as absolute; but, it must be observed, no authority short of a General Council can do this.

Further, Catholics may be easily distinguished from non-Catholics in their mode of worship. The celebration of the Holy Eucharist, though it may differ in rite and detail of ceremonial in Rome, Moscow, and London respectively, is yet sufficiently alike at S. Peter's in Rome and S. Paul's in London to present a strong contrast to the services in all non-Catholic places of worship, where everything centres round the pulpit; save on the comparatively rare occasions when the members of certain of these religious bodies (by no means all, for the 'Society of Friends' is an important exception) partake of what they call 'The Lord's Supper.' Again, fasting, which is regarded as a religious duty not only by

Catholics but by Jews, Mohammedans, and even in some heathen religions, has in modern times almost wholly disappeared, and is no longer recognised as a duty among non-Catholic Christians, together with such customs as kneeling in public prayer, making the sign of the Cross, etc. We do not mention these things unkindly, but for the purpose of making a necessary distinction.

We have used the term 'non-Catholic' rather than Protestant, because the word has been grossly abused in modern times for controversial purposes. The name is derived from the famous *Protest* tendered at the Diet of Spires in 1529 by certain German princes and the deputies of fourteen imperial, or free, cities against what they described as the 'unjust and impious decree' of the Emperor Charles V., that the Reformation 'should go no further' than the abolition of admitted abuses, such as the sale of pardons. The Protesters assembled next year at Augsburg and drew up the famous 'Augsburg Confession,' which is the standard of doctrine in the Lutheran Church to this day, and from which it took the name of the Protestant Church. Strictly, Protestants are merely those who accept the Augsburg Confession of Faith, but in a short time it came to be the common designation of all Western Christians who had broken off communion with the Church of Rome. But it should be carefully noted that the distinction was not between Protestant and Catholic but between Protestant and Papist; that the Pope was the head of the Catholic Church, and the Vicar of Christ on earth was the very thing against which they protested. But though, for a time, the devastating flood of the Reformation swept away nearly all landmarks in those countries of Europe over which it spread, many of them afterwards emerged when the waters had somewhat abated. Of all the Reformed Churches, that of England alone has succeeded in preserving the Apostolic Succession of its ministers against a strong party who were in favour of establishing a Presbyterian succession. Consequently, it claims to be a reformed branch of the Catholic Church, and though many of its adherents still call themselves 'Protestants,'

the name has of late years fallen into disrepute, chiefly because it has become identified with a party which seeks to obliterate the essential difference between the Church and the numerous religious bodies by which it is surrounded. The Church of England occupies a unique position in modern Christendom which is at once its strength and its weakness, and it is with this position that we now propose to deal.

To the intelligent foreigner the Church of England presents as many anomalies as the British Constitution. The English are devoted to their Sovereign, though they have carefully deprived him of the last shred of political power. Yet the monarchy is the one bond of union between the mother-country and the Colonies, which are, in all other respects, independent and self-governing communities. We are (or were) proud of our Parliament, nearly every member of which owes his seat to the votes of the ignorant, which turn the balance in every contested election. We cling to our antiquated legal system, resting on a foundation of innumerable precedents, the manipulation of which gives employment to a profession whose interest it is to resist codification, and maintain the abuses which make them rich. And lastly, so far as the writer has been able to ascertain, the majority of Englishmen—Churchmen, Dissenters, and even Roman Catholics—are all, for different reasons, in favour of preserving as an institution the greatest anomaly of all, '*The Church of England as by Law Established.*' Strangely enough, the agitation in favour of Disestablishment which was carried on by the Dissenters a generation ago has dwindled to almost nothing, but it is now being taken up by certain members of what is called the 'Extreme High Church' section, who are gradually discovering that the connexion of the Church with a Protestant (and pretty thoroughly Protestant) State is becoming for Anglican Catholics an intolerable nuisance, and that even the preservation of our endowments may be too high a price to pay for such advantages as it may have hitherto possessed.

There can be no question that the Catholic, or 'High Church,' is now the dominant party in the Church of England.

The 'Evangelicals' mostly belong to the last generation, while the Liberal, or 'Broad' Church, party has little influence outside the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. We are speaking, of course, of genuine Churchmen, not the loose mass of nominal adherents. Whether this balance would be maintained in the event of Disestablishment it is impossible to say for certain. Some High Churchmen think that the first use the Church will make of her freedom will be to commit ecclesiastical suicide by some formal act of heresy, such as tampering with the Creed, or the Christian law of marriage, or admitting to its ministry persons who have not been episcopally ordained. In that case the duty of Catholics will be plain: they must choose between submission to Rome, or becoming a Western branch of the Eastern Orthodox Church, where they would be in a position of less advantage than their present one of an independent Church capable of mediating between East and West, and at the same time extending a helping hand to Protestants who would be repelled by a foreign rite. This would certainly be a misfortune; but if, as seems not unlikely in the near future, Church and State should come into collision on the subject of the Marriage law, the relations between the two will be strained to the breaking point and the connexion will have to be severed, even at the risk of disruption in the Church.

Meanwhile, let us take comfort from the thought that the Church of England has been recognised, by friend and foe alike, as occupying, in the Providence of God, a unique position in Christendom, which clearly indicates that she has a mission and exists for a special purpose, viz. that of mediating between the separated Churches and sects and effecting an ultimate reconciliation on the basis of Catholic communion. If she is really destined for this work, she will not be destroyed before she has accomplished it. The opinion of De Maistre that the Church of England is capable of becoming a rallying centre for the reunion of Christendom, because she extends one hand towards Catholics and the other towards Protestants, is so well known and so frequently quoted that the passage need not here be given, but we will give in full a quotation,

not so well known, from an essay entitled ' The Latin Church and Protestantism,' by the Russian theologian Khomiakov. It was published in the year 1857, soon after the secession to Rome of Mr. Palmer and others, and at a time when it appeared that the whole Catholic movement in the English Church was likely to collapse.

> ' Anglicanism, by its most distinguished representatives, has condemned the Roman Schism in all its distinctive dogmas ; that is to say, in the Papal supremacy and (by implication) in the addition of Filioque, an addition which the scholars of Germany, and amongst others M. Bunsen, likewise declare to be an obvious falsification. Anglicanism has not a single reason to give, *and has never given one,* for not being Orthodox. *It is in the Church by all its principles*—I mean by that its real and characteristic principles ; it is outside the Church by its historic provincialism—a provincialism which imposes upon it a false appearance (*faux air*) of Protestantism which deprives it of any tradition and of any logical basis, but from which it has not the will to emancipate itself, partly because of national pride, and partly because of the habitual respect in England for an accomplished fact.'

Since these words were written, more than sixty years ago, things have much improved, but we have not yet wholly emancipated ourselves from the ' historic provincialism ' which at that time found its expression in the now utterly discredited *via media* theory which would keep the Church of England suspended, as it were, between the Catholic Church and the Protestant sects. There are still some who cling to that theory, even among those who call themselves High Churchmen, but it has no roots in history, and was merely a device of the early Tractarians to justify their remaining in communion with a Church which had forgotten its Catholic traditions. It is for the Catholic party in these days to uphold those traditions, which have their sanction in the Book of Common Prayer, and to insist on the maintenance of those doctrines and practices which naturally flow from them, without any regard to the theory of a doctrinal ' balance '

between Catholicism and Calvinism which finds favour in some quarters, on the ground that such was the intention of the Reformers in the sixteenth century. If there be any such balance, it is our duty to upset it.[1] The Church of England must at all costs emancipate herself from what Khomiakov calls the 'false appearance of Protestantism' if she is to fulfil the purpose for which she exists. Whatever may be said against the Church of Rome, it cannot be denied that she has maintained the Faith once delivered to the Saints, and is a standing witness to the principle of law and order against the anarchical tendencies of modern civilisation. It is the glory of the Orthodox Churches that they have not only maintained unbroken the Faith and traditions of the Church, but have for centuries resisted all attempts to encroach upon their liberty to govern themselves according to those traditions. Protestantism has for its *raison d'être* the maintenance of the principle that each individual has the right to frame his religious beliefs and order his life in accordance with what he supposes to be the teaching of Holy Scripture. But none of these things can be said of the Church of England. She may have maintained the Faith, but has broken with Catholic tradition; she has allowed the State to encroach on her liberties, and can no longer enforce discipline on her members; she is out of communion with other Catholic Churches, and in communion with heretics who call themselves by her name and at the same time repudiate her authority. Little more than seventy years ago she was at the point of death, if not actually dead, but the Angel of the Resurrection sounded his trumpet, and the instrument was a man named John Keble. Life began to revive in what was to all appearances a corpse, willing hands rolled away the stone of her sepulchre, and like Lazarus, the Church of England came forth bound in the grave-clothes of the State connexion. She wears them to this day, to the grievous hindrance of her work in converting sinners. In God's name, loose her and let her go!

[1] See an article in *The Times* of October 26, 1918, on 'Prayer Book Revision,' by 'A Correspondent.' This anonymous gentleman has for some time past aired his theological opinions in that journal every Saturday. Of course, no replies are admitted.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

'And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world (or age, αἰὼν) to come.'—*The Œcumenical Creed.*

THAT truth is many-sided is a commonplace, if not a truism, but though the principle is admitted in theory it is often denied in practice. Heretics, or those who pick and choose (αἵρεσις, choice), deny every aspect they do not themselves perceive, like the two knights who fought to the death to maintain that a certain shield which was gold on one side and silver on the other was either a gold or a silver shield. Truth has, at least, a front and a back, and the truths of the Christian Revelation are no exception to the rule. Take the assertion that our Lord died on the Cross, was buried, and rose again the third day. This is, and was intended to be, an historical statement in the same sense as the statement that Julius Cæsar was stabbed to death, was buried, and there was an end of him. But certain scholars, who for some reason call themselves 'Liberal' Churchmen, will not look this truth in the face, because to do so would commit them to belief in the miraculous. 'Far be it from us,' they say, 'to deny that our Lord rose from the dead. As Churchmen we are bound to believe it, but being Liberal Churchmen we cannot be expected in these days of scientific enlightenment to take the same view as our simple forefathers. It was a spiritual resurrection. The essence of the Gospel He preached when on earth was His life, and that could not be destroyed by His physical death. It lived anew in the Christian Society which we call the Church,

and in this sense it may be truly said that our Lord did really (though not literally) rise from the dead. Nobody would deny, or wish to deny, this aspect of the Resurrection, but it is only a back view, and an inadequate one at that. The front view is, of course, the historical one. If we accept that, we may proceed to regard the Resurrection in its other aspects, but, if we reject it, all talk about 'aspects of a Great Truth' resolves itself into endeavours to explain away a falsehood.

From our standpoint, therefore, viz., that our Lord did really die and rise again in the Body which was nailed to the Cross, we may now discuss the clause in the Œcumenical Creed which is printed at the head of this chapter, first in its literal (or front) sense, and then in certain other aspects. There are those who would substitute for the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body the heathen one of the immortality of the soul. It is difficult to say why so many people find it easier to believe in the latter than the former, unless it is because the tendency to visualise the unseen leads them to think of the soul as having shape, and consequently resembling a more or less unstable human form. In other words, they believe in the survival, and persistence, of a very unsatisfactory quasi-material body rather than in the resurrection of a sensible and solid one. This fancy, for which certain phenomena of the séance room are partly responsible, has for many people superseded the Christian doctrine and given a false appearance of evidence in favour of what was originally nothing more than a philosophical theory. If by the soul is meant the human personality minus the body, or vehicle of its activities during its sojourn on earth, the materials of which are derived from this planet and return to it at death, the phenomena of the séance room afford no evidence of its persistence after that change, still less of its immortality. Even if we admit that the communicating intelligence, or 'spirit,' is in any sense the deceased person—and there are many reasons for doubting it—the communications are of such a character as to make it difficult to believe in the continuity for any length of time of such a maimed and unsatisfactory life. The fact is, that what is now called 'spiritualism'

was formerly known as necromancy. It is concerned in no sense with *life* and immortality, but with certain aspects of *death*, or the reabsorption into the world vortex of the forces which went to make up the earth life of the individual. This is, in the nature of things, an involutionary process, whereas the resurrection of the body is evolutionary, being an increase of life values consequent on a quickening of the spirit by a Divine life impulse conveyed through the medium of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ whereby we are made partakers with Him in the eternal procession from the Father of the Holy Spirit the Lord and Giver of Life. As He rose from the dead so shall we rise. 'Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming' (1 Cor. xv. 23).

But, having said this much, we have now to consider another aspect of the Resurrection. The intimate union between Christ and the Church, which is His Mystical Body, finds its outward expression in the history of the relations between the Church and the world. The parallel is singularly close between the life of our Lord when on earth and the Church He founded. 'He came to His own (the Jews), and His own received Him not,' but handed Him over to the Gentiles to be crucified. In the same way the Jews rejected the Gospel of their salvation and chose instead national death and damnation. When it was presented to the Gentiles their attitude was at first sympathetic, like that of Pilate, but when they discovered that Christ claimed to be King in opposition to Cæsar the Church was cruelly persecuted. This corresponds to the scourging and mocking of our Lord, and finally it was handed over by Satan to a slow and agonising death by schism. For centuries the Church has been hanging on the cross of the world's order between the two thieves of greed and ambition, alive and suffering. Its enemies 'wag their heads,' and call on it to prove its claims by coming down from the Cross. It has forgiven those who nailed it there, for they knew not what they did and blindly obeyed the orders of the Prince of this world. It has promised Paradise, or rest, to those who have suffered for the sake of righteousness (i.e. those who have revolted against the world's order by force and have suffered

in consequence). It has maintained the human tradition of family life, the instinctive appeal to God for succour in distress, and that thirst for righteousness (or justice) which the world's order denies to suffering humanity. Is the agony of the Church nearly over, and the words 'It is finished' yet pronounced? We may think so. This Great War, more terrible than any in history, has caused the earth to quake and the rocks to be rent. Science has torn asunder the veil of materialism which has hitherto hidden from human ken the forces which lie behind the phenomenal universe, and is about to forge the first link in a chain of discovery that will connect chemistry with psychology. All this time the Church, like her Lord and Master, has been 'reigning from the Tree.' The Prince of this world and his minions had clothed our Lord's Mystical Body in a purple robe of imperialism, and bowed before Him in mockery as a temporal monarch. They put a reed in His hand to symbolise temporal power. In the year 1870 they took away these false insignia, but 'a diadem as monarch still His brow adorns.' It is 'a crown in very surety, but of thorns' from the garden of Mammon which wound the Sacred Head, and this He will wear until He is taken down from the cross of the world's order to which He is nailed fast and will hang until the Body 'by schisms rent asunder' dies from inanition and loss of blood. It is the Passion and death of the Church as an institution separate from the world, and against it the Prince of this world has triumphed. But his victory will be turned into a crushing defeat. What was true of our Lord's natural body is true of His Mystical Body. It will not see corruption, but the Church, as we know it, must depart to make way for a new descent of the Holy Spirit, —a mighty life-impulse that will make all things new. We have known it in weakness, it will show itself in strength; we have seen it 'by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distrest,' but the time is approaching when the free atoms (or individual Christians) will be drawn together by the law of spiritual affinity in some tremendous explosion of Almighty goodness.

Meanwhile the religious 'leaders,' like the Pharisees whom our Lord called 'hypocrites' (or *play-actors*), are busy with

' schemes of reconstruction,' such as establishing the Church on a ' sound democratic foundation ' in order to secure ' Life and Liberty,' readjusting the Creeds to ' bring them more into harmony with modern thought,' and generally exhibiting themselves as incapable of discerning the signs of the times as were their prototypes. ' Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone.'

If there is one thing more certain than another it is that the risen Church, so far from being in harmony with ' modern thought,' in the usually accepted sense of that phrase, will be in violent discord with it. Modern thought, like modern civilisation, is confined to a very small class. Civilisation may be described roughly as the art of living happily in community, and it is notorious that only the few can do this in the world as we know it. It is doubtful whether the lot of the Hebrews working under the lash of their Egyptian task-masters was worse than that of the sweated London slum-dwellers before the War. Or, rather, it is not doubtful, for the Hebrews were, at least, well fed and had flocks and herds of their own, and neither in Egyptian, nor any other ancient civilisation, was there ever such a spectacle as that which could be seen any night on the Thames Embankment, where starving wretches slept in the rain and cold on the seats below in full view of the hotel windows above, behind which scenes of shameful luxury and dull ostentation of so-called ' wealth ' insulted their misery.

Again, ' modern thought ' touches a mere fringe of the so-called educated classes. Of these not one in a thousand who prefer Sunday golf to church is repelled from the latter by intellectual difficulties about the ' supernatural element ' in the Creed ; if the truth were known, it is probably the *absence* of the supernatural element in the *public worship* of the Church which is responsible for his lack of interest, for it is a well-established fact that where it prevails the churches are not only well attended, but often crowded. It is also well known that in what is called ' Society,' strange cults such as ' Bahai-ism ' (if that is the correct expression), ' Christian Science,' etc., are extremely popular, astrologers and fortune-

tellers flourish exceedingly, and the gap left by the abolition of relics of the saints in church has been filled by mascots on motor-cars. *'Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurret.'* The intellectual difficulties are felt for the most part by the uneducated, or, rather, self-educated. classes; the intelligent artisan, for instance, whose mental pabulum is derived from the second-hand bookstalls, which reflect the ideas of a past generation of thinkers, and who has neither the means nor the opportunity of consulting modern works of science or theology. Men of this kind are the backbone of the nation, and in a properly constituted society should be given every advantage to enable them to take their rightful place among the really educated class from which they are at present excluded through no fault of their own, but of the civilisation under which they have the misfortune to live.

It is only a certain type of theologian who, being a specialist in literature and having only a bowing acquaintance with science, learned in Biblical criticism, and childishly ignorant of human nature outside his university, imagines that Christianity divested of the supernatural element could interest anybody but themselves, or resemble anything else than the play of 'Hamlet' with the part of Hamlet left out; for it must be remembered that the Founder of the Christian religion claimed to be Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life—a claim totally incompatible with the theory that He was merely a 'Great Moral Teacher' like Confucius and other sages. People of this kind make the great mistake of supposing that the Church is founded on opinions instead of the fellowship which comes from union with Christ. They would do well to ponder the words of Bergson, whose philosophy differs from most other philosophies in that it does take account of human nature: 'Il y a des choses que l'intelligence seule est capable de chercher, mais que, par elle-même, elle ne trouvera jamais. Ces choses, l'instinct seul les trouverait; mais il ne les cherchera jamais.' [1] The risen Church is as little likely to trouble itself much with its relations to science, or the relations of science to it, as an ordinary man in good health

[1] Cf. Isa. lxv. 1.

to worry about his digestion and circulation, and that for a very good reason. For a long time to come it will have to consider other and far more important problems that cry aloud for solution. The first and most pressing one will be its relation to the 'Mammon of unrighteousness.' This problem, which has been stated in a masterly fashion by Mr. Bernard Shaw in 'Major Barbara,' is the Sphinx riddle for the Church of the immediate future—she must solve it or perish.[1]

Then there is the question of a central authority for a united Christendom. Its locus may, or may not, be the City of Rome, but if it is to command universal respect and obedience it will certainly not take the form of a 'Vicar of Christ on earth' in the person of an infallible Pope at liberty to add to the Faith once delivered to the saints, but not to enforce the moral law. It is an open secret that a recent occupant of the Chair of S. Peter[2] was given to understand that any public condemnation of Germany's conduct towards Belgium would be followed in Catholic Germany by a '*Los von Rom*' movement on a hitherto unprecedented scale. It will be found, and before long generally recognised, that the Great War has destroyed, among other false things, the Papal theory of Church government, which has no roots in Catholic tradition, which has always been repudiated by the eastern half of Christendom, and which is utterly foreign to conceptions of authority held by the Church of the first four or five centuries. The modern Papacy is an anachronism. It is, and has long been, for all useful purposes dead, and the feet of those who have buried Autocracy in the State are at the door to carry away Autocracy in the Church. The titular head Bishop of the risen Church will exercise an authority that will be disputed by none, for he will speak, not in his own name, but as the mouthpiece of a body of representatives freely chosen from all nations. There will be no need for

[1] That Mr. Shaw is an 'unbeliever' does not detract from his prophetic authority. One of the greatest of the prophets was a free-thinker in the matter of burnt sacrifices (Jer. vii. 22). Priests and prophets have always been at war.

[2] Pius X.

infallible new definitions, for the Faith has already been defined in the Œcumenical Creed ; and it will be the duty of the Central Authority to preserve Catholic tradition, not to impose new dogmas, but, while allowing the utmost liberty of thought outside the limits imposed by the Creed, to extend a wide tolerance to all pious opinions and their outward expression in devotional customs, whether these customs do, or do not, commend themselves to the more educated—e.g. the belief that S. Antony of Padua (to take an extreme case) may be invoked for the recovery of lost property. It may be the business of the *schoolmaster* to oppose this belief : it is not the business of the *Church* to condemn harshly such harmless credulities which give pleasure to her little ones.

But it is in the sphere of Christian morals that the chief need for a central authority will arise. Putting aside for the present the scheme for a ' League of Nations ' to abolish war, and the question whether it is likely to succeed in the absence of an impartial authority to enforce its decrees on the conscience of mankind, there is the question of the marriage laws, which is itself only a department of the much larger question of the relation of the sexes in the new social and economic conditions that will soon prevail. It would be foolish to anticipate the solution of this tremendous problem, but it must be remembered that the Church has the Power of the Keys in Divine Commission, or the authority to remit as well as to retain sins. If it has not only allowed, but encouraged, righteous wars in spite of the Sixth Commandment, it is also at liberty to dissolve the marriage bond in certain cases in spite of the Seventh. Those who talk about ' opening the flood-gates of licentiousness,' if the slightest relaxation is permitted, forget that the taking of interest for money which is now permitted by the Church ' for the hardness of our hearts,' was formerly prohibited to Christians on the ground that it was unlawful between Jew and Jew, and was moreover forbidden by Christ Himself (S. Luke vi. 35).

History repeats itself, and we are now at a crisis which can only be compared to the destruction of ancient Roman civilisation by the incursion of the barbaric tribes which up

to then it had succeeded in keeping in order. There are signs everywhere of the revolt of the poor of all classes against their continued exploitation by the rich of more than one class. The iniquity of this exploitation is admitted by all thoughtful people. Men of goodwill in every rank of society unite in deploring a state of things which diverts into other channels the greater part of the wealth produced by manual labour to an extent which deprives the labourer, not only of the comforts of life, but of those amenities of social intercourse to which every member of a civilised community is justly entitled, but which require for their exercise and enjoyment a certain standard of education and culture. This class-consciousness, expressed in the saying that 'people are divided into those whom you can invite to your table and those whom you cannot,' is perhaps one of the worst features of 'Christian' civilisation (in the Mohammedan East it does not prevail); for, though utterly opposed to the fundamental principles of Christianity, it is not only maintained by the 'classes,' but, so far from being a grievance in the eyes of the 'masses,' it is cheerfully acquiesced in as a useful distinction, uniting the majority who are determined to have their share in the material wealth of this world against the minority who are withholding it from them. So long as this distinction is maintained all hope of solving the Social Problem is vain. As 'Holy Alliances' in the past did not, and 'Leagues of Nations' in the future will not, get rid of war, so neither will 'schemes for the better distribution of (material) wealth' in England, 'Syndicalism' in France, or Bolshevism in Russia avail to save men from themselves. Sin lies at the root of the problem, and it will be the task of the Risen Church to proclaim and enforce the truth that Christ, and Christ only, is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, that the wages of sin is death in societies as well as individuals, that all efforts to evade this penalty are, and must be, in vain. Experiments in 'reconstruction,' such as readjustment of the incidence of taxation, rearrangement of the relations between Capital and Labour, etc., though they may have a fleeting success, cannot do more than postpone the death of a civilisation

which contains within itself the seeds of political, social and economic disease. To vary the metaphor, modern civilisation is, in a very real sense, a house built upon the sand of individualism, the grains of which have no cohesion, instead of the rock of that unity in Christ which is the only sure and stable foundation. It was designed and elaborated by 'foolish' men who 'heard the sayings of Christ but did them not.' As the Jews said 'not this man but Barabbas,' so did they say 'not this man but Bentham' and the gospel of Utilitarianism. When the winds of agitation blow, the rains of strikes and lock-outs pour down, and the flood of general revolt against intolerable conditions of life undermine the foundations, the house will fall and 'great will be the fall of it.'

## CHAPTER IX

### AUTHORITY IN RELIGION, ITS NATURE AND LIMITS

We have now dealt *seriatim* with all the Articles of the Œcumenical Creed, and it remains to consider its claims to be accepted as the foundation of a theological system which shall be at the same time a philosophy of life adapted to the needs of the present day. To the question 'What is its authority?' we cannot reply with the Roman Catholic 'The Church,' or with the Protestant 'The Bible'; for this would be, on the one hand, to argue in a circle, or, on the other, to assert that the elephant rests on a tortoise. We have endeavoured to prove that if the Creed is to be accepted or rejected on its own merits it is more reasonable to accept it. But the question of authority is not thereby excluded, for it is implied in the words 'I believe in One (Holy [1]) Catholic and Apostolic Church,' and also that our Lord rose again 'according to the Scriptures.' The Church has authority to teach in virtue of her Divine Commission, and the authority of the Scriptures, as a revelation of the Will of God, is an important part of her teaching. And as the authority of both Church and Scriptures has been, and still is, a subject of dispute, the matter is one that calls for attention.

The word 'authority' is sometimes employed in its primary sense, in which it answers pretty nearly to the Latin *auctoritas*, as when a statement is given of some fact on the authority of such and such historians, or when we speak of

[1] In the first edition of our present Prayer Book the word 'Holy' was omitted by mistake (not by authority) from the Nicene Creed, but it appears in the Apostles' Creed.

correcting a reading in an ancient classic on the authority of such and such a MS. In this sense 'authority' is a claim on our *deference*. But the word is also used as equivalent to *potestas* = power, as when we speak of the authority of a parent, or a magistrate, in which case it is a claim on our *obedience*. It is in these two senses that the Church of England in Article XX. claims to have *power* to decree rites and ceremonies, and *authority* in controversies of faith. It is also in the sense of *potestas* that she requires from her members (so long as they choose to remain members) belief in the Creed, and in the sense of *auctoritas* the acceptance of all other dogmas, or settled beliefs. For be it noted that the Creed is a statement, not of *opinions* about which there may be shades of agreement and disagreement, but of *facts* that are either true or false, and on the truth of which her existence depends; for there can be no superstructure without foundations. But the current objection that dogmatic Christianity demands the sacrifice of our intellectual freedom will not bear examination so far as the Church of England is concerned. Outside the Creed her members are at liberty *theoretically* to reject her dogmas (though, of course, at their own spiritual peril) without being called to account for it, unless, like the clergy, they are her accredited teachers.

It is here that the Church of England differs from the Church of Rome. For instance, it is a dogma of the whole Catholic Church, or a *settled belief* dating from the times of the Apostles, that our Lord is present (and should be adored in consequence) under the forms of Bread and Wine in the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar, but it is only in the Church of Rome that belief is required in a particular *theory* of that Presence called 'Transubstantiation,' which involves not simply the *presence* of Christ but the *absence* of the bread, and consequently, as our Article XXVIII. points out, 'overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament.' [1] The Catholic dogma,

[1] The doctrine of Transubstantiation is not so much a definition as a vain effort to explain a Divine Mystery in terms of an obsolete mediæval dialectic. It took its rise from the supposed necessity of a buttress to the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence in the form

as distinguished from the Papal theory, is a logical deduction from certain aspects of the Incarnation: it is implicit in the Creed, and therefore explicitly taught by the Church whose *authority* has a claim to our *deference*. In the same way Newton's Law of Gravitation is a scientific dogma, implicit in the Euclidian conception of space, and will remain a scientific dogma until the experiments of Einstein, or some other investigator, give astronomers good reason for modifying that conception. Meanwhile, Newton's Law has a claim on our deference as the authoritative teaching of science, and no one but a fool would deny it on the ground that astronomers are 'only fallible men,' or that he has 'a right to his own opinion.' All dogmas or settled beliefs are entitled to respect, and must not be challenged on mere personal grounds, and this applies to theological as well as to scientific dogmas. A reasonable modesty is not incompatible with intellectual freedom.

The same principle holds good in relation to a large number of other things officially held and taught, but to which outsiders take objection on various grounds: such as, to mention only two, the necessity of a valid ministry, or the dogma of 'Apostolical Succession,' and the importance of Confession and Absolution, or the 'Sacrament of Penance.' Catholics must really be excused if they view the arguments of the objectors in the same light as scientists regard those of the 'flat earth' men. There is no question of 'excommunicating' or, as the Dissenters call it, 'unchurching' these people, for they are only too ready to excommunicate themselves; and when, on rare occasions, they present themselves at our altars they are seldom, or never, repelled.

Now the Christian religion has been defined in unmistakable language by its chief doctor S. Paul as 'the fellowship of a mystery whereby the manifold wisdom of

of a supplementary doctrine of the absence of the bread. What can it matter to any sane man or woman whether, or in what sense, the bread is either present or absent? It is as idle as a controversy whether a bank-note is worth exactly £100, or £100 *plus* the infinitesimal sum representing its value in the waste-paper market.

God is revealed *through the Church* to men and angels' (Eph. iii.).[1]

This is the 'One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church' of the Œcumenical Creed, and being a 'fellowship' it has authority over its members. We have dealt with this Article in its place, and claim to have established (i) that this authority resides not in any individual bishop, but in the totality of the episcopate, and in them *solely as representatives* of the whole body of the Church, both 'Militant' and 'Triumphant'; and (ii) that this authority (*potestas*) is *administrative* only and corresponds to that of the magistrate in civil life. The Bishop is the appointed guardian of the 'Faith once delivered to the saints,' and has no more power to impose new doctrines than the civil magistrate to make new laws. On all questions of interpretation in controversies concerning the Faith the final court of appeal is a General Council. This is not a 'merely Anglican view,' as the Roman Catholics are fond of asserting, but the official and accredited teaching of all those national churches of Greece, Russia, Bulgaria, etc., which have been held together for centuries in one communion and fellowship by the bond of 'Orthodoxy.'

Against this we have the Papal theory, which rests on a mechanical view of authority utterly alien to the spirit of the Gospel. Founded on an interpretation of Matt. xvi. 18 contrary to that given by any one of the early Fathers—particularly the great Latin theologian Saint Augustine—

[1] *Vide supra* chap iv. We have more than once called attention to the fact that S. Paul was a Master in Occult Science (which must not be confounded with what is known as Magic, from which it differs as 'pure' from 'applied' Mathematics), belonging to the highest grade of Initiates. The 'mystery' to which he refers is the Sixth of the 'Seven Great Mysteries'—i.e. the 'Mystery of the Word.' When the Word was made flesh the 'manifold wisdom of God' was revealed in the Person of Christ. In the Greek Church one of His titles is 'The Holy Wisdom,' or *Saint Sophia*, to whom the Emperor Justinian dedicated the great cathedral at Constantinople. Desecrated by the Infidel Turk in A.D. 1453, it remains in his hands in 1922, to the shame of Western Christendom in general, and the British Empire in particular.

supported by forged documents such as the 'Decretals' of Isidore, and the 'Donation of Constantine,' the doctrine of the Papal Supremacy, which arose in the Dark Ages following on the destruction of Roman civilisation in Western Europe, has been developed in recent times to such lengths as almost to imply a quasi-hypostatic union of the Holy Ghost with each successive Pope. In 1870 it culminated in the dogma of Papal Infallibility, of which it has been wittily said that it reduces the Bible to one text 'Thou art Peter,' and the Creed to one Article 'I believe in the Pope.'

In spite of this, large numbers of people persist in the assertion that the Catholic Church consists solely of those Christians who are in communion with the Pope, and not only Roman Catholics, but a section of Protestants make use of it for their own purposes—the latter as an argument *against* what they call 'Institutional Christianity.' But unbelievers cannot be allowed to beg the whole question of the truth or falsehood of the Christian Revelation by assuming that it is of the nature of an arch of which the Papacy is the key-stone. That this is not the case is proved by the fact that the Orthodox Churches of the East have never accepted it, even in its original and comparatively harmless form of titular primacy since the Emperor Constantine removed the seat of civil government from the Tiber to the Bosphorus, and yet these Churches have maintained the Catholic Faith 'whole and undefiled,' generation after generation, in the face of persecution at the hands of the Infidel. On the contrary, they say that the first Protestant was the Pope.

And it is notorious that when the Church of England was in full communion with Rome, and therefore presumably 'Catholic,' the right of the Pope to appoint to benefices and otherwise interfere in ecclesiastical administration was hotly contested, not only by the King, but by English bishops, during several reigns, and finally made illegal by statute under Edward III. Even Henry VIII., who beheaded Catholics for refusing to acknowledge him head of the Church (of England) in his capacity of Defender of the (Catholic) Faith, burned Protestants for denying Transubstantiation. Roman

Catholics argue that, 'without a visible monarchical head, the Church would lack unity and would be merely a society of good men differing in all their opinions, earnestly seeking for the truth but with no certainty that it has ever been found and no hope at all of ever finding it.' Now this is nothing less than a denial of the office and work of the Holy Spirit in the members of the Mystical Body of Christ. The true *Vicar*, or Representative, of Christ on earth is the Paraclete Whom He sent to 'guide the Church into all truth,' and the assumption of that title by the Bishop of Rome is an act of rebellion against the real Vicar of Christ or the Holy Spirit. The Papacy is, in truth, of the nature of a cancerous growth in the Catholic Church. Physiologists tell us that cancer is the recrudescence of an embryotic process. Certain groups of cells, instead of fulfilling their proper function of building up the tissue of the organ in which they are situated, divert their energies to the attempt to construct a new one, with disastrous results to the economy of the whole cell system of the body; not only is the morbid growth nourished at the expense of the organs which are functioning normally, but it actually attacks and bores through them in its efforts to reach the outer surface of the body. When reached, the cancerous epithelial cortex breaks down and becomes an open sore, liable to infection from the hostile microbes without. Cancer in the individual is analogous to a successful insurrection against the forces of law and order in the body politic, a state of civil war which dissipates the resources of the nation, and by weakening its resistance to foreign aggression renders it an easy prey to its enemies.

This comparison of Popery to a cancer, or 'malignant' tumour, in the body of the Church Militant here on earth will probably give offence, not only to Roman Catholics, but to many Anglican Churchmen. The latter will perhaps be willing to admit that it is of the nature of a *morbid* growth, but of a 'benign' rather than a malignant character. It is a question of diagnosis. In its early stages it is often difficult to decide whether an abnormal growth is benign or malignant, and it would be easy to demonstrate, on a superficial view of

history, that the Papacy exercised a controlling influence for good in the Dark Ages which succeeded on the destruction of the Roman Empire in Western Europe. But that influence had for its foundation the false dichotomy of an *ecclesia discens* and an *ecclesia docens*, which has deprived the laity of their rightful share in the councils of the Church, and diverted all religious activity on their part into the one narrow channel of clericalism, with the fatal result that, on the continent of Europe, 'Catholicism' has become identified with obscurantism, and the 'Church,' by which is meant the clergy, generally regarded as the implacable enemy of progress, political, social, scientific, and even religious in so far as religion involves morality. It is not necessary to take this extreme view in order to recognise that Papalism is not only of the nature of a morbid growth on the body of the Church Militant, but that it is of a 'malignant' rather than 'benign' character, inasmuch as it sucks its vitality and diverts, for purposes of its own aggrandisement, the energies which should be directed towards the destruction of the kingdom of Satan and the establishment on earth of the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness in place of the world's righteousness which is represented by modern civilisation.

It is of the utmost importance in view of the future of Christianity that Anglican Churchmen should 'clear their minds of cant' in regard to this subject. If it be true that Popery is a malignant growth on a large section of the Catholic Church, diverting its energies into unwholesome channels, boring into and infecting healthy tissue, and threatening its very life, then it is a 'work of the Devil,' and there can be no charity in pretending that it is not.

And here we must leave the subject, for it is no part of our duty as Anglican Catholics to take up the position of 'accusers' of our Roman Catholic brethren. Their accusers are the Saints and Doctors of the Catholic Church, in whom they trust as the Jews trusted in Moses.[1]

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[1] S. John v. 45.

We have now to consider the teaching of the Church in regard to the Holy Scriptures. It is worthy of note that the only passage in the Creed in which they are mentioned refers solely to the Old Testament, and is confined to the assertion that the Holy Ghost 'spake by the Prophets.' The expression 'as saith the Scriptures' is used continually by the Apostles and early Fathers and Doctors of the Church, *but always in reference to the Old Testament*, including the 'Apocryphal' as well as the 'Canonical' books. They deal with them, moreover, in a way that totally excludes the modern superstition that their historical accuracy, or inaccuracy, is even worth troubling about, or affects one way or the other their relation to the 'Faith once delivered to the Saints.' There could be no greater contrast than is to be found between the attitude of modern theologians towards the events related in the Old Testament and that of the Apostles and early Fathers. These latter neither affirm, nor deny, their historical character: it is for them a matter of no importance. The value of the story of Hagar and Ishmael for S. Paul is, he tells us plainly, its *allegorical* character; Hagar being 'Mount Sinai in Arabia' from whence the Law was delivered, and Ishmael the earthly Jerusalem which is under the Law, as distinguished from Isaac who represents the Heavenly Jerusalem (Gal. iv. 22 *et seq.*). S. John the Baptist poured scorn on the argument that the Pharisees and Sadducees were children of Abraham, and declared that God could make 'children of Abraham' out of stones. Even our Lord Himself treats the story of Jonah and the whale as mythical, and written for the purpose of foreshadowing His Resurrection.[1]

Jewish and early Christian exegetics were entirely different from modern. Their interpretation of the Bible was founded on a principle called *ἀμφιβολία*, i.e. double, or even multiplex, meaning, and this is the explanation of the arguments from prophecy so freely used by the evangelists to prove that Jesus

[1] To contend, as some do, that He thereby affirmed its historical character is as foolish as to say that everyone who alludes to 'sour grapes' commits himself to the belief that foxes eat grapes and can talk.

was the Messiah. Many of these appear to us moderns to be far-fetched and some even ridiculous, but there can be no question that they had considerable weight with their fellow-countrymen and contemporaries. That the Holy Ghost 'spake by the Prophets' is one of those universal truths without which the Creed of the Catholic Church would be incomplete. The prophets are men chosen by God in every age to declare His will, which in different ages assumes different aspects. The 'burden of the Lord' was upon the old Hebrew Prophets to proclaim that God was a God of righteousness, and would by no means suffer iniquity to go unpunished, and they proclaimed it with a wealth of the most picturesque imagery that easily lent itself to analogies between one historical period and another. It was reserved for the pioneers of the Christian Dispensation to gather all these threads into one, and demonstrate to an expectant world that all their aspirations were fulfilled in the person of Jesus, the Christ (or Messiah) in whom they were blended into unity; and that the blood He shed on the Cross was for us the Blood of the New Testament (or Covenant) superseding the blood of the Jewish sacrifices. For them it was the *prophetic* rather than the *historic* element in the Old Testament that really mattered, and it was to the *Prophets* that our Lord referred, when He bade His enemies to 'search the Scriptures,' rather than the *Law*, which they had accused Him of violating by healing on the Sabbath day (S. John v. 39). We see, therefore, that the Creed does not require us to believe in Jonah and the whale, or that the sun stood still in the valley of Ajalon, or that a prophet caused iron to swim, as so many historical facts, but as symbolic incidents in an account of the gradual education of a people whom God chose as a medium through which He might reveal Himself, first as *One*, next as *Sovereign*, and finally as *Saviour* of mankind.

We now come to the question 'In what light are we required to regard the books of the New Testament?' They consist (i) of four short accounts, by different hands, of the birth and (with the exception of one incident only) the last three years of our Lord's life on earth as a man among men;

(ii) of a brief chronicle of the infant Church called the 'Acts of the Apostles'; (iii) a number of letters, mostly by S. Paul to the Churches he had founded in various cities, and two or three to private individuals; and (iv) The Apocalypse or 'Book of Revelations,' a treatise of a prophetic character attributed to S. John the Apostle. Together they make up what are called the 'Canonical' books of the New Testament, or the final result of a sifting process which established these documents, and no others of the same kind, as expressing *authoritatively* the mind of the Church. In other words, the Church does not require of her members belief in anything that is not contained in them explicitly, or implicitly, and of what is, or is not, implicit she herself is the judge. But the Church has never formulated any theory of inspiration which involves inerrancy in matters of detail: she does not even require belief in the tradition on which their authenticity rests. It is no part of the 'Faith once delivered to the Saints' that S. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, or that S. Peter is the author of the Second Epistle which bears his name. That Faith was anterior to both Epistles and Gospels. That our Lord was born of a Virgin, was crucified, dead, and buried, rose again the third day, and finally ascended to Heaven, was believed long before any written accounts existed, but nothing was more natural than that those who believed should want more information, especially in regard to His teaching.

It is generally supposed that the first to supply this demand was a young man named John Mark whom S. Peter calls his son (in the Faith), and to whom he imparted the required information; and it is worthy of note that in this Gospel, which begins with our Lord's baptism by John in the Wilderness, nothing is said concerning His birth, about which there is no reason to suppose that Peter had any knowledge. Mark wrote his Gospel in Greek for the benefit of Gentile converts, but it is very bad Greek, disfigured by provincialisms, and both Hebraisms and Latinisms which betray the foreigner. Prior to this, however, there is reason to believe that certain sayings of our Lord had been preserved by some

Greek-speaking Jew, and translated by him. Of these 'sayings' or λόγια, some fragments written on papyrus have been discovered in recent years, and the Gospel according to Matthew is said to be founded on certain λόγια collected by the Apostle of that name, and many years afterwards incorporated by an unknown person, whose name may have been Matthew, in an account of our Lord's life and ministry, written with the special intention of proving to the Jews that He fulfilled all the conditions of Messiahship.

The Gospel of S. Luke is quite a literary achievement. It aims at a striking portrait, for which, as the writer tells us in his proem, he had by diligent search industriously gathered all the available information. Little is known of him except that he was a dear friend and companion of S. Paul, and a physician by profession. As his name Λουκᾶς denotes, he was probably a Greek, at least on his father's side, and his style, though marred by Hebraisms, is fairly good provincial Greek, and shows the educated man. He differs from the other two 'Synoptists,' as they are called, in attaching more importance to the literary rather than the chronological order of the events he relates.

The Gospel which bears the name of S. John the Apostle, and which we have all now agreed to call the 'Fourth Gospel,' on account of differences of opinion as to whether the author was the son of Zebedee or another man of the same name, differs from the three others in two important respects. First it claims to be the account of an eye-witness, and the claim is supported by internal evidence, and secondly it deals almost exclusively with our Lord's ministry in Judæa and Jerusalem, as if that were its chief scene, with only occasional visits to the provinces, which we know was not the case. The reason for this is evident. The writer did not set himself the task of writing so much a chronicle of our Lord's life as a selection from those words and works which bore on His claims to be, not only the Messiah, but the Way, the Truth, and the Life, or the Revelation of God in His own Person. Strange to say, he omits an important saying, recorded by the Synoptists, when Christ was before the High Priest—viz.

'Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man . . . coming in the clouds of heaven'—and, still more strange, he makes no mention of the Institution of the Sacrament of Holy Communion at the Last Supper.

From this we can only draw the conclusion that though he writes as an eye-witness of what took place in Jerusalem—the disputes with the Pharisees and Sadducees, the arrest in the garden, the trial before Pilate, the Crucifixion and Resurrection—he was not present at the Last Supper, in which case he was certainly not S. John the Apostle. After all, it matters little who wrote the Fourth Gospel; what does matter is that without it the story of the Synoptists would have been incomplete.

But these four Gospels were, at first, by no means the only ones. There were probably dozens, now lost, though several are extant at the present day, such as 'Infancy,' the 'Protevangelion,' and others of varying degrees of authenticity. The Churches were so widely scattered over the Empire that in the early Church the particular Gospel used was determined by accident, or choice of bishop, and selection was made in a way that would surprise a modern Bible worshipper. For instance, Eusebius informs us that at Rhossus, in the diocese of Antioch, in A.D. 190 a gospel, of which the authorship was attributed to S. Peter, with the authority of the bishop Serapion, was read, until he discovered that certain passages were being quoted from it in favour of the Docetic heresy concerning our Lord's human body. Immediately he prohibited the reading of it in public and the Rhossian Church had to find another. Everywhere the test was conformity, or non-conformity, to the Apostolic Tradition, and this was the ground on which the 'Canonicity' of the New Testament books was finally established. The four Gospels are an example of the principle of the 'survival of the fittest.' We have it on the authority of the Church that the information they give is substantially true and correct, though they may contain errors of detail; but the important thing about them, which determines the canonicity of these and no others, is not so much their superior accuracy, or the entire absence of

legendary matter, or even, as we have seen, their authenticity—for in regard to all these things there is room for difference of opinion—as their conformity to the Apostolic tradition. Now what does this imply? It implies in the first place that while we are quite at liberty to hold with the textual critics that the authors of Matthew and Luke derived their information from a hypothetical document called 'Q' (i.e. *Quelle* or 'source'), we are bound to believe that the events recorded in Matthew prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the long-expected Messiah. We may or may not believe that the Fourth Gospel was the work of John the son of Zebedee; we are at liberty to rearrange, if we please, the chronological order of the events therein related in the light of the 'Synoptic' accounts; we may even hold that the Evangelist has 'edited' our Lord's discourses both with His disciples and the Pharisees and Scribes; but we are required to accept them as evidence that He was, not only the promised Messiah, but the eternally begotten Son of God.

It is the same with the other books of the New Testament. The Church has declared that the letters of S. Paul and certain other Apostles are to be received as authoritative expositions of her doctrine, but she has never formulated any theory of Inspiration that would justify the extravagant notion that these writings alone constitute the 'Word of God' to the exclusion of all others. The same holds good of the Apocalypse, the last and only prophetic book of the series. It owes its position in the New Testament to its prediction of the final triumph of Christ over His enemies, temporal and spiritual, without which it was felt that the Canon of Authoritative doctrine would be incomplete.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the Church of England, unlike the Church of Rome, claims authority over her members for her dogmatic teaching only in the sense of *auctoritas*. This is at once her strength and her weakness. To take an extreme case, any Churchman is at liberty to doubt, and, if he is a layman, even openly to deny (as did the late Mr. Kensit) that Christ is present, and should consequently be adored, under the forms of bread and wine in the

Eucharist. On the other hand, it is frequently alleged as a reproach against the Church of Rome that she tolerates in her children every sin but heresy. It is said that thieves, drunkards, and even fornicators in high positions (e.g. Louis XIV.) can obtain absolution on easy terms, but not those who question her right to dictate how men shall think; all her members being required to give 'interior assent' to every dogma once it has been 'defined,' however much it was formerly disputed.

This is the exact opposite of the policy which has now for many years prevailed in the Church of England, and it must be admitted that from a superficial point of view the advantage lies with the Church of Rome. That thieves and harlots go to Church quite naturally in Spain and Italy and equally naturally keep away in this country is no ground for self-complacency on our part, especially since in some churches the best places are reserved for the proud and covetous. It merely proves that here the Pharisee has succeeded in convincing the Publican that he has no business to come into the temple at all, but only into a 'mission room' to be operated upon for 'motes' in the eye, 'beams' only being tolerated in church. That the Church of Rome has kept the poor and ignorant—the very classes to whom the Gospel was first preached—is all to her credit, and the corresponding debit balance to the Church of England, it must be confessed, is a heavy one. But if it comes to a question of ecclesiastical book-keeping, the Profit and Loss Account of the two Churches shows also a large debit amount on the Roman side. To drop the metaphor, the Church of Rome, though she has succeeded in keeping the poor and ignorant, has made the fatal mistake of claiming authority in the sense of *potestas* over opinions instead of confining it to actions, with the result that the great mass of the cultivated laity, in every Roman Catholic country in the world, has been alienated not merely from the Church, but from Christianity itself, whereas in England it is the other way about, indeed too much the other way from the point of view of true religion.

But though the Anglican Church has pursued the opposite

policy of claiming authority for her dogmatic teaching in the sense of *auctoritas*, it must not be supposed that she has abandoned it in the sense of *potestas* (in theory at least, however weak in practice) over the *actions* of her members. There would have been no Kensit scandal if the State had not deprived the Church of England of the right to enforce discipline over her own members. To take an analogous case, any Englishman is at liberty to hold, and openly proclaim, his belief that the earth is flat, and to convert to that belief as many people as he can. He may even hold a public meeting to protest against the 'dogma' of its roundness opposite the rooms of the Royal Astronomical Society, but he would not be allowed to force his way inside and harangue the members on the ground that he was a better astronomer than they.

We repeat, however, that we are not anxious to emphasise the difference of opinion between ourselves and our fellow Catholics of the Roman obedience as to the best way of maintaining and propagating the Catholic Faith. If we have done so in this instance, it was for the purpose of demonstrating (i) that belief in the Catholic Faith does not necessarily include belief in the doctrine that the Bishop of Rome is the 'Vicar of Christ on Earth,' and in consequence may dictate what we shall or shall not believe; and (ii) that the Anglican Church is not open to the criticism that she requires from her adherents the sacrifice of that liberty to 'prove all things and hold fast to that which is good,' that is the liberty involved in the doctrine that the true Vicar of Christ is the Holy Spirit who was sent by our Lord to 'guide us into all truth.'

For the purpose we have in view it is sufficient to point out that while the question of authority, as interpreted by the Church of Rome, constitutes a formidable obstacle to belief in the Catholic Church as a philosophy of life adopted to the needs of the present day, no such obstacle stands in the way of its hearty acceptance by the cultured classes generally, and scientific men in particular, in the Church of England. On the contrary, it is to them she appeals to enforce her authority by precept and her discipline by example.

## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUSION

In the foregoing pages we have exhibited the Creed as a statement of facts which, if true, it cannot be denied are of the first importance. They constitute the foundations of a philosophy of life which, translated into practice, is the Christian religion. It is a religion and a philosophy which claim to be Catholic, or adapted to all men and all times, to the learned as well as the simple, to advanced as well as to primitive civilisations, to the twentieth century as well as to the Middle Ages.

Briefly the situation amounts to this. On the one hand we have the Catholic Church 'built on the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone'; the Catholic Faith as expressed in the Œcumenical Creed—a document which has stood the test of sixteen centuries as an authoritative exposition of the belief of the Church from the days of the Apostles until now; and on the other hand—what?—Decaying religions, e.g. Buddhism galvanised into a semblance of life by new fashions in European thought; private philosophies of the Universe by popular writers like Mr. H. G. Wells, sectarian Protestantism, the 'Creed of Science,' and mere stupid incredulity. But the fact remains that a large number of people are unable to accept either the Faith or these alternatives. Asiatic religion does not attract them, and they are repelled by sectarian Protestantism. For them 'God the Invisible King' is a hypothesis, not a revelation. They are quite aware that Huxley and Tyndall are no longer names to conjure with, but

they would indignantly deny that their incredulity is stupid, or wanting a rational foundation. It is evident that behind the difficulties we have been discussing lie other and even more fundamental problems. With one of these we propose now to deal, for, though somewhat outside the scope and design of this work as set forth in the title, it constitutes one of the most formidable obstacles at the present day to belief in the Creed, which yet, for all that, provides the only satisfactory solution. We refer to the problem of how to reconcile the existence of evil with the Omnipotence and, at the same time, the goodness of God. It has occupied the minds of men since the days of Job, but has been forced into unusual prominence by the events of recent years, and especially the catastrophic effects of the Great War. It is, therefore, one which, for obvious reasons, we cannot avoid, and accordingly we must give some indication, at least, of the lines on which a possible solution may be found. This problem resolves itself finally into a question of origins, and to deal with it adequately would require a separate book, for the solution must be sought, if anywhere, in the theory of evolution stretching far beyond the limits of what we are accustomed to regard as human origins ; and, indeed, into a transcendental realm of thought which takes account of the laws which govern cause and effect on the higher planes of consciousness, in which all external phenomena have their source and subsequent manifestation.[1]

Briefly, the key to the problem in question is ' Relativity,' —a principle which has always been recognised, but the mathematics of which has been enormously developed within the last half-century by Gauss, Riemann, Lobatchevsky, and others. Within the last year or two it has attracted the attention of the general public through Einstein, who has applied it to a new theory of gravitation which bids fair to revolutionise our conceptions of what is supposed to be reality manifesting in time and space. It has even invaded

[1] The author has dealt with this subject more fully, and in greater detail, in a former work, *The Transcendental Universe* (Redway, 1896). The book is out of print, but copies can still be obtained from Mr. Watkins, Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C. 2.

the field of psychology, and in a recent work by Lord Haldane has been made the foundation of a new metaphysic.

Baldly stated, God being *ex hypothesi* the Absolute, absolute goodness cannot in the nature of things be manifest to the creature who, however high in the scale of creation, is by parity of reasoning finite, and to all finite conceptions relativity is necessary. We can only know light by comparing it with shade; the conception of unity is inseparable from that of multitude, and of goodness from that of evil; for if evil were absolute it would be the negation of God, or absolute non-being, which is, of course, unthinkable. Evil, therefore, is relative, and its opposite is *relative* goodness. But relative goodness is imperfection, and the opposite of imperfection is perfection, or God, which is absurd. But God is the All in One; therefore, if evil be not God it is nothing. Q.E.D. Shakespeare uttered a profound truth in the person of Hamlet when he made him say, 'There's nothing either good or bad, but *thinking* makes it so.' Evil may therefore be regarded as a concept inseparable from the idea of goodness, which, like all other ideas, is conditioned by relativity; and from this it follows that there is no inconsistency in believing in the existence of evil and at the same time in the goodness of God, for the terms are incommensurable. To the further question, 'How is it compatible with His Omnipotence, seeing that it is contrary to His Will,' the answer is that, under the Christian dispensation, God has revealed Himself to man, not as Perfect Will, or Perfect Wisdom, but as PERFECT LOVE. If the Omnipotence of God were displayed by His Will there could be no freedom, and consequently no personality for the creature. If wisdom were the highest good, an immeasureable chasm would have separated for ever the creature from the Creator: for wisdom is only one aspect of life, proceeding from the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life in all its aspects, and is therefore *relative*. It follows that if God had revealed Himself as Absolute Wisdom all other aspects of life would be *ipso facto* excluded.[1] But God has chosen to

[1] The Son is revealed as the Divine Wisdom by *limitation*, which involves relativity.

reveal Himself as Love: hence the necessity of freedom on the part of man to choose between good and evil, for were he not free he would not be able to reciprocate that love by endeavouring to do His Will on earth as it is done in Heaven.

We cannot pursue this subject further than to remind those who reproach God for permitting men to sin, and thereby to suffer and die, and cause suffering and death to others, that, in the Person of His eternally begotten and only Son, God Himself suffered, died and rose again for our deliverance, and so reconciled us to Himself that we might live for ever in the light of that *knowledge* of Him in which alone eternal life consists (S. John xvii. 3).

To the same category belong 'scientific' objections to prayer. They are really based on a false metaphysic, the scientific element being supplied by what Professor Tennant calls one of those 'generalisations from research that are illogically identified with universally valid principles'; viz. that all material conditions are capable of reduction to mechanical terms, from which it follows that any material movement, whether of molecule of brain, or orbit of planet, can only be produced by other antecedent or concurrent material movements.

To these, and indeed several other, metaphysical difficulties the best answer to the problems supposed to be involved is the one given by the disciples of the Eleatic philosopher—*Solvuntur ambulando*. They are mostly objections not simply to the Creed, but to any form of belief that can properly be called Theistic. With mere Agnosticism, as with other forms of the Pyrrhonistic philosophy, it is useless to contend, for it is as unassailable as the logic of insanity. Any ignoramus can pose as a philosopher by calling himself an 'agnostic,' which is the same thing in Greek.

A very good test to apply—let us say—to the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity is that of the Alternative. Is anyone prepared with a more satisfactory definition of God? Atheism, as we have said, is mere folly and need not be considered, and Polytheism belongs to a former stage of man's intellectual development. There remain only Pantheism and Unitarian Monotheism. Pantheism, as we have seen, is a more subtle

form of Atheism, for it is a theosophy without the Theos ; it takes the reflexion of God in nature for God Himself, and is a denial that the *effect* has any *cause*. Of Unitarian Monotheism we have an example in two of the great historical religions, Judaism and Mohammedanism. The former, in its inception, was a tribal form of Polytheism ; the existence of other deities than Jehovah was not denied, but Jehovah was the most powerful, and, as a jealous God, demanded exclusive worship from his own people, the punishment for going after other gods being plague, pestilence, famine, and destruction by their enemies. Above all, he was a God of righteousness, and under the Old Covenant Jewish aspiration after God took the form of a passionate longing for the promised Messiah who should bring all nations to His feet, and rule the world in righteousness. Judaic Monotheism may be described as an *interim* theology—a preparation for the higher synthesis implicit in the revelation contained in the Word made Flesh. In this respect it differs from the Mohammedan variety, which is not only grossly anthropomorphic, and consequently devoid of metaphysical interest, but as a belief is *static* and unprogressive. Unlike the Jewish idea of God, which was essentially *dynamic*, and underwent considerable development during the centuries which separate Abraham from Philo of Alexandria, the God of Mohammed is a figment of the Prophet's invention. He is the God of neither the Jews nor the Christians, but an imaginary being whose character is that of an Oriental despot, and the Mohammedan religion would be better described as Mono-*dæmonic* rather than Mono-*theistic*.

' Unitarian Christianity,' so-called, need not detain us. Members of the sect professing this belief repudiate, for the most part, the opinions of their original founder Faustus Socinus, and prefer to call themselves ' Liberal ' Protestants. Their ' Christianity ' shades down from the semi-Arianism of Channing to mere ' Humanism,' but they no longer count as a religious force either in England or the United States of America, where in 1825 they possessed nearly 3000 congregations. Of late years they have produced no theologian of

any note since Dr. Martineau, or any writer of importance since F. W. Newman. In fine, belief in God can only take three forms, Polytheism, Pantheism, and Anthropomorphism, and as I have said in a former work, ' The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is alone capable of blending into a synthetic unity these apparently irreconcilable ideas. The worship of Christ Jesus the God-Man satisfies the anthropomorphic instinct which differentiates religion from philosophy. The sacramental idea, which is involved in the doctrine of communion with the Word made Flesh, is essentially pantheistic ; while polytheism, or the recognition of divinity in unity in teleologic research, is redeemed from the charge of idolatry when the principle laid down by S. Paul (1 Cor. viii.) is admitted, that though " there be gods many and lords many," yet (*for us*) there is but " one God and one Lord "—that is, all secondary causes have their origin in the one great Cause to Whom alone supreme worship is due.' [1]

Again, let us take the doctrine of the Incarnation, or the Word made Flesh. The Creed makes certain statements in regard to the mode in which the great gulf, created by sin, between God and man was bridged over, viz. that the Word came down from Heaven, and by the operation of the Holy Ghost was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Also that the Man so conceived and born into the world was put to death by crucifixion, that He rose again the third day and finally reascended to the Father to reign with Him for ever. Now these statements are either true or false ; to try to explain them away by saying they are ' symbolically but not literally true ' is evasive and disingenuous. On the assumption that they are fictions it follows that the religion which, by insisting on the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, has given freedom to the slave, has raised the status of woman by its worship of the Virgin Mary, and, as even its enemies admit, has ennobled human life by its art and literature, has its origin in a root of falsehood.

The ' exquisite reason ' usually given for this monstrous assumption is that the Creed was the product of an uncritical, unscientific, and therefore credulous, age ; but this is the very

[1] *The Transcendental Universe* (Lecture IV.), p. 83.

reverse of the truth. The age was, on the whole, rather less credulous than the one in which we are now living. And certainly no one with even an elementary knowledge of the history of the times,—of the intellectual fermentation due to conflicting ideas about the nature of God and His relation to man from which the Œcumenical Creed finally emerged—could say that the age was 'uncritical,' while to call it 'unscientific' is to beg the whole question.

If, on the other hand, we accept as true the statements of the Creed in regard to the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection and the Ascension, we recognise in the 'miraculous element' a master-key, of which they constitute the wards, to the problem of how the Divine Purpose, or the salvation of man from sin and death, may be, and is, in process of fulfilment. So far as the evidence for them is concerned we could not reasonably ask for better. They form part of the Apostolic tradition which we know was so jealously guarded that the invariable test of heresy was whether this or that opinion agreed or conflicted with it. The information about the conception and birth of our Lord and of the part played by Joseph, when his betrothed was found pregnant before marriage, must of course have been obtained by them from the Blessed Virgin Mary herself; and though we have no earlier written record of the details than the somewhat late 'Gospel according to Matthew,' its 'canonicity,' unlike that of the so-called Apocryphal Gospels, has never been called in question. We are therefore justified in assuming that the facts therein related are in accord with the unbroken Apostolic tradition.[1]

In this connexion we may notice that though the perpetual

[1] A faint sidelight is thrown on the evidence by a passage in the Fourth Gospel, which omits all reference to the birth of Christ, and deals almost exclusively with His ministry in Judea and Jerusalem. In one of the many heated disputes between our Lord and the Pharisees, the words 'We be not born of fornication' occur (ch. viii. 41). From this it would appear that the secret had leaked out that Jesus was not really the son of Joseph; probably through some testamentary dispositions after his death, which by that time had taken place. Modern Jews assert that the father of Jesus was a certain Jachan Bar-Levi, a minister of the Temple.

virginity of the Holy Mother is not an Article of the Creed, we have it on the authority of Clement of Alexandria. and Tertullian that it was a common belief at the end of the second and beginning of the third century A.D., which could hardly have been the case if it had not the support of Apostolic tradition.[1] The Protestant denial of the perpetual virginity rests on a mistranslation of the word ἀδελφός in the Authorised Version of the New Testament, where it is rendered 'brother' instead of 'cousin' or 'kinsman.' There can be no doubt that 'James the Lord's brother' (Gal. i. 19) was the Apostle of that name who was the son of Alphæus, and was called the 'Less' to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee, who was slain by Herod in A.D. 44. Otherwise, how can we account for the fact that Jesus, when dying on the Cross, committed the care of His Mother to a stranger in blood if she had another son still living? Is it suggested that our Lord held in light esteem the Fifth Commandment?

As for the Resurrection and Ascension, the whole case, as we have seen, is what lawyers call a 'strong' one, resting as it does on the number and credibility of the witnesses. It is admitted that these are sufficient to establish any *normal* historical event; but, because these are *abnormal*, those who refuse to admit them fall back on Hume's theory of miracles, unaware probably that it received its death-blow at the hands of the late Mr. Babbage. In his 'Ninth Bridgewater Treatise' on the nature of cumulative evidence, that eminent Victorian and inventor of the calculating machine worked out an elaborate mathematical refutation of Hume's theory. He shows that if definite degrees of probability, however small, can be assigned to the testimony of each witness, then the resulting probability in favour of their united testimony would not be obtained by the mere *addition* of the numbers, expressing the several probabilities, but by their *multiplication*. In the case of the Resurrection and Ascension, the number represented by the united testimony of the witnesses is so enormous compared with that represented by its antecedent

[1] See *Stromata* of Clement and *Ex Carne* of Tertullian.

improbability, that we should be forced to accept on such testimony (if it existed) the marvels of the 'Arabian Nights,' and he who refused would be the creature of prejudice and the victim of prepossessions.

Let it be understood, however, that we are here dealing only with the attitude of mind which rejects the miraculous element in the Christian religion on *a priori* grounds. It is one thing to believe for good and sufficient reasons that the Resurrection and Ascension actually took place; it is quite another to suppose that we are thereby committed to belief in the historical accuracy of every detail in the accounts left by the Evangelists, or are required to 'harmonise' them where they differ. It cannot be too often repeated that the Creed *does not depend for its authority on the New Testament,* but on the unbroken tradition of a society which existed before a line of the New Testament was written, and whose very *raison d'être* was the Resurrection itself.

We have now arrived at a point at which we may inquire why the Creed of Christendom which, as a philosophy of life, had moulded the civilisation, and satisfied so many generations of the most advanced nations of the world, gradually fell into discredit when European thought had attained to a certain stage of development. To answer this question with any approach to completeness would require a separate volume: here we can do little more than indicate the lines on which such an inquiry might usefully proceed. In the life of all nations and races there is a periodic alternation of spiritual and intellectual advance and retrogression, corresponding to the systole and diastole of the heart-beat which controls the circulation of the blood on which the life depends. In the aged person the rate of heart-beat is, roughly, about a third of the normal rate in the new-born infant, and half that of the adult in the youthful prime of his mature vigour. In ancient civilisations, such as India and China, the alternating periods are now so long as to presage dissolution. In what is called 'Christian' or European civilisation, which is not yet 2000 years old, the periods are much shorter and comparatively easy to mark, for they happen to coincide, more or less,

with the centuries of the Christian era, as Mr. Frederic Harrison has pointed out in his brilliant essay on 'The Thirteenth Century.'

On to one of these periods of intellectual advance and spiritual retrogression Western Europe entered at the beginning of the eleventh century, which marked the end of the 'Dark Ages' properly so-called. During that period the Papal claims to hegemony had been developed and consolidated. Throughout Western Christendom the whole history of religious thought, from the Revival of Learning to the great cataclysm which we call the Reformation, was a series of conflicts between reason and the authority of a Church in which a mass of what were originally 'pious opinions' had crystallised into dogmatic teaching, and accreted round the original deposit of the 'Faith once delivered to the Saints.' Many of them had become discredited, owing to the advance of knowledge and its dissemination among the laity which followed on the invention of Printing; and, as time went on, the conflict between the votaries of the Old and the adherents of the New Learning became more and more acute.

It is frequently alleged that the Protestant Reformers in repudiating the authority of the Pope ushered in the age of civil and religious liberty by establishing the Bible as the ultimate authority on all disputed questions, but nothing could be further from the truth. What they really did was to undermine the foundations of the Christian religion when they substituted for a living tradition a dead chronicle which they call the 'Infallible Word of God.' An infallible book requires an infallible interpreter, and, for lack of one, the truth or falsehood of the Creed became a matter of opinion, on which men might legitimately differ as to whether it could be proved from the Bible. The results were not long in showing themselves. Servetus denied original sin, opposed infant baptism, and declared that the doctrine of the Trinity was a Popish superstition and not to be found in the Bible. For thus exercising his right to appeal to the 'Infallible Word of God,' he was denounced by Calvin as an impious blasphemer, and was burned alive at Geneva. His two disciples, the

Socini, uncle and nephew, avoided this fate, the former by a hypocritical recantation, the latter by fleeing from Switzerland to Poland, where he succeeded in inducing the civil authority to adopt his opinions. There he founded Socinian congregations, from which centre the infection spread westward, and in time invaded, and ultimately conquered, a great part of Switzerland itself.

Such, then, was the situation in Western Christendom at the end of the sixteenth century. It was the culmination of a process of religious degeneration in Western Europe which always accompanies a period of intellectual progress and spiritual retrogression. It began with schism and ended in disaster. The Reformation in the sixteenth century was the inevitable consequence of the substitution in the eleventh of the authority of the Pope, in the West, for that of the Catholic Church, when, in A.D. 1054, the Papal Legate laid the Bull of Excommunication against the Patriarch of Constantinople on the High Altar of Saint Sophia.

From these considerations it is evident that the failure of the Church, during the last nine hundred years, to conquer the world, and bring mankind to the knowledge of God, and the Salvation wrought by Him through our Lord Jesus Christ —a failure which is in striking contrast to the remarkable success that attended its first millennium—can be directly traced to the sin of pride in its earthly rulers, which destroyed in its members that unity of spirit which is the bond of peace, and the parent of righteousness of life. If this failure is to be remedied, the very first condition is the restoration of outward and visible communion between the Churches of Eastern and Western Christendom, and to this work it is plain that the Church of England has received a call from God. Unlike the other Reformed Churches in the West, she has preserved the Apostolic Ministry and the sacramental system. She was inoculated with the Protestant virus, but though at one time the poison seemed to threaten her life she has made a truly marvellous recovery, and is rapidly regaining her health. In spite of the fact that she is the official Church of a Protestant State, she has successfully resisted all legislation framed

for the purpose of destroying her Catholic character. Consequently, the Church of England occupies the unique position of a branch of the Catholic Church outside visible communion and fellowship with all the others in various parts of the world. Obviously the situation is anomalous. The Anglican Church cannot remain for ever suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between the Catholic sky and the Protestant earth. Whatever prospects of reconciliation with Rome may have existed in the past have been destroyed by developments in recent years of the Papal claims, which now constitute (humanly speaking) an insuperable barrier. It is becoming clearer and clearer every day that God has preserved the Church of England for more than three hundred years, through all her dangers and temptations, and especially 'perils from false brethren,' in order that she may become the instrument, in the hands of Providence, for healing the age-long breach between East and West, of which the Enemy has taken advantage to hinder the establishment on earth of the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

But it is only in quite recent times that this truth has come to be generally recognised by English Catholics. Up to the year 1896, which witnessed the formal condemnation of Anglican Orders, many of them cherished the hope of an understanding with Rome that might pave the way to intercommunion on terms that might prove not intolerable. Those hopes were dashed to the ground. It was a rude disillusionment, but a wholesome lesson. Ten years later a society was formed, called the 'Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches Union,' which had for its object the friendly intercourse between ourselves and our Eastern brethren, with a view to the establishment of formal intercommunion. Never has a movement been crowned with more remarkable success, or shown more visibly the Blessing of God on its efforts. For details of its history, the reader is referred to the Sixth Report of the 'Anglican and Eastern Association' (its present name) for 1914–1921, which may be obtained from its present Secretary, the Rev. C. Norman Smith, 24A, S. Charles' Square, North Kensington, London, W. 10. Suffice it to say

here, that conferences have been held between leading theologians of the respective Churches, with the result that the Greek Authorities are convinced that the Anglican Church is (officially, at least) in all essentials Orthodox, and the Patriarch of Constantinople himself, who has lately visited this country and conferred with the Archbishop of Canterbury, is so eager for reunion that he has signified his intention of raising the question of formal recognition before a Council of the Orthodox Bishops to be specially convened for that purpose. It is almost incredible that union between ourselves and the Orthodox East, which only a short time ago was regarded by many as a vain dream, and by others as a distant hope, should have been brought, by the Blessing of God on those who have worked for it in faith and prayer, *in less than twenty years* well within the sphere of practical ecclesiastical politics. 'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.' If their efforts should be finally crowned with success, Christendom will have entered on a new era.[1] Sectarian Protestantism will wither and die of its own inherent absurdity among educated persons. It will come to be generally recognised that belief in the Catholic

[1] It is, perhaps, as well to explain that reunion with the East (unlike all proposals for reunion with Rome) implies neither the Orientalising of the Anglican, nor the Anglifying of the Orthodox Church. They will not require of us that we should abolish organs, or destroy the beautiful screen of Winchester Cathedral, or the reredos at S. Paul's, because their own singing is without instrumental accompaniment, and the Orthodox Church does not admit of 'graven' images, but only pictures. Nor, on the other hand, should we be so foolish as to expect the Orthodox clergy to shave their faces, introduce surpliced choirs and 'low' masses; or to insist on Confirmation being separated from Infant Baptism and Communion. Differences of custom should be no barrier to brotherly love and unity. On the contrary, the more diverse the form and outward expression in which the Holy Spirit manifests Himself in different Christian countries who hold the same Faith, the better it is for all. Each communion has truth and spiritual experience complementary to the other, and nothing but advantage will accrue from a frank recognition that from their mutual difference of custom each has much to learn from the other, and that only in the Universal Church can the fullness and harmony of Truth and the Spiritual Life be found.

Faith can have no stable foundation apart from belief in the Catholic Church, and accordingly the 'Bible, and Bible only,' Protestant must sooner or later disappear. But of the future of Protestantism we will speak presently.

The first thing we must consider is, what will be the position of the Church of Rome when confronted with the *fait accompli* of a formal reunion between East and West—that is, between the Orthodox Churches of the East, which have never admitted the Papal claims to supremacy, and a Western Church purged of heresy, holding the Catholic Faith, and maintaining Western traditions in public worship; each, not only willing but anxious, to forget past quarrels, compose present differences and restore to Christendom that visible Unity which will alone enable the religion of Christ to conquer the kingdoms of the world! Will, or can, the Church of Rome maintain her rigidity in the face of this new combination? Under the circumstances all side issues will have vanished, and the only question for discussion will be, 'Did our Lord, or did He not, commit to S. Peter and his successors plenary authority over His Church when He said that on this rock He would build it?' The whole dispute between the Churches of the Roman obedience and the rest of the Catholic Church will have narrowed down to a question of history and canon law.

We will not indulge in anticipations, but are content with pointing out:

(1) That the present situation is unique in the history of the Church, which is now sharing with the whole civilised world a disgust for war and an intense longing for peace;

(2) That the election of a Patriarch of Constantinople, eager for reunion with the Anglican branch of the Catholic Church, happens to coincide with the election of a new Pope, Pius XI., who, being a scholar and an advanced thinker, is likely to reinstate the Jesuits in place of the conservative Dominicans as the 'Power behind the Pope'; and

(3) That, if this should come about, political will be subordinated to religious interests, and then the reunion of

Christendom will have been brought within measurable distance.[1]

Of one thing we may be sure, that the great Enemy of souls will do his utmost to hinder this 'consummation devoutly to be wished,' and will organise against it all his available forces; and this brings us to the question of the future of Protestantism. In its present form of sectarianism it is, as we have said, doomed to wither and die, for with the disappearance of ecclesiastical despotism it will no longer have any *raison d'être*. In the new conditions it will take on a distinctly recognisable form, viz. a conflict between the religion of the Incarnation and a conception of God akin to that of Mohammedanism and modern Judaism, with which there is reason to think that Protestantism will sooner or later make common cause. This is not so extravagant a forecast as it may appear to those who, incapable of learning from the past, are blind to the dangers of the present and the immediate future. Very few people recognise that in the seventeenth century Europe had a narrow escape of becoming, like Turkey, a Mohammedan country with a persecuted Christian minority. And yet, if John Sobieski had not repulsed

[1] The dislike and suspicion with which the Society of Jesus is generally regarded, not only in Protestant but in Catholic countries, is largely due to that fear which the unknown always inspires. Being a secret society, with an almost perfect discipline, it works by underground methods, and the strategy of its leaders is not always apparent even to its own members, who are quite content to trust them. But outsiders (with the exception of certain Masonic lodges who are fighting them) often make the most ludicrous mistakes. For instance, a generation ago it was quite a common belief that the Catholic Movement in the Church of England was due to their influence, and that many of the so-called Puseyites were 'Jesuits in disguise.' As a matter of fact, the Society was opposed to the Movement from the year 1850 to some time after the death of Queen Victoria, as a hindrance to their own plans for converting England. But the triumph of the Catholic party in the Anglican Church over its enemies, and the movement for promoting union with the Orthodox Churches of the East, has caused them to reverse the policy hitherto pursued in view of the larger issues at stake, and, instead of opposing Anglicanism, to make use of it in bringing about the end for which the 'Society of Jesus' exists, which is the establishment of His reign on earth.

the Turkish army from the very gates of Vienna in 1683, Islam would have succeeded in effecting a juncture with the Calvinists of Western Europe with whom it was essentially one in spirit, with results that, even at this distance of time, it is difficult to contemplate without shuddering. For them history has been written in vain, and it is therefore not surprising that modern politicians are in a state of Bœotian darkness in regard to the significance of much that is going on under their noses. To them the ' Jewish Peril ' seems as unsubstantial a bogey as the ' Yellow Peril ' which disturbed the dreams of the late German Emperor in pre-war days. They seem totally unable to grasp the fact that a world-wide conspiracy is in actual being whose object it is to destroy the whole fabric of our social structure, and that it is being engineered by Jews. Its headquarters are in Russia, from whence its agents in every part of the world receive secret orders and the necessary funds to stir up strife in all civilised countries between Capital and Labour, to exacerbate race hatred and religious bigotry (especially in India) and encourage rebellion among subject peoples, to hinder at all costs the establishment of peace in Ireland, to assist with money the revolutionary party in China, and prevent an understanding between the United States and Japan. There are those who deny the existence of any such conspiracy because it has been proved that the ' Protocol of the Elders of Zion ' is a forgery, as undoubtedly it is. So were the Piggott letters, in which the present writer never believed, because they expressed so exactly the real sympathies and ultimate aims of Parnell that he would have been a fool to run the risk of committing them to pen and paper, and the ' Elders of Zion ' are certainly not less astute.[1] But whether engineered by Jews or Gentiles,

[1] In reply to those who deny the existence of a ' Jewish Peril,' we are willing to concede that the majority of Jews (in this country, at least) have no more desire to overthrow a civilisation by which they profit than a farmer to slaughter his best milch cow, and also that it is absurd to suppose that Jews in high position would knowingly lend themselves to any such conspiracy. On the other hand, we call their attention (i) to the fact that in every country the Jew is an alien, and is keenly conscious of it. However much he may pose

few will be found hardy enough to deny that there *is* a world-wide movement having for its object the destruction of the framework of the existing social fabric. There can be no doubt that vast sums are being expended for the purpose of inoculating the less intelligent of the working classes in this country with the poisonous ideals which we now find it convenient to comprehend under the general term of 'Bolshevism,' the object being, of course, the capture of the Labour Party by their votes. The conspicuous failure of our statesmen to cope with the situation is only one more sign that England has arrived at the parting of the ways. She has discovered by bitter experience that the wages of sin is death, whether individual or social; she is at last crying out like the Philippian jailer, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' and the answer is now, as in the days of S. Paul, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved.' 'Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? saith the Lord,' is the message of the Church to the nation, and men are everywhere saying, 'Who is He that we should believe in Him?' And the answer is still the same, 'He that hath overcome sin and death in His own Person by bearing in His body the consequences of sin (thus paying its wages), and then rising from the dead to become the firstfruits of them that sleep. Behold the Lamb (or Sacrifice) of God that taketh away the sins of the world.' But how? By imparting to us His life in the two sacraments generally (i.e. universally) necessary to salvation, viz. Baptism and the Holy Communion of His Body and Blood. Of course, many will say with Nicodemus, 'How can these things be?' We might reply that if Christ is the Great Physician of souls, the Healer of our social disease, the patient would be wiser to submit to the treatment than to inquire

as a patriotic Englishman, Frenchman, or American, in his heart he despises the Gentile. And (ii) every Jew, even though he may be an atheist, from the financial magnate in Park Lane to the pedlar of lemons in Whitechapel, expects a Messiah who will establish a world-wide Jewish Empire on the ruins of Gentile civilisation. Moreover, in certain Jewish circles, it is current gossip that, owing to something that happened in 1916, the times are growing ripe for his appearance, and preparations are being made already to receive him.

too curiously into its scientific basis. However, in accordance with the methods we have pursued throughout this work, we will say a few words about the Sacraments of the Church from the point of view of their therapeutic value.

Sacramentalism is to the spirit what symbolism is to the mind, and both are systems which make use of the visible and material things to convey benefits of an invisible and immaterial character: they are, so to speak, mediums of exchange between separate individuals. Thus, the writer conveys his thoughts to the reader by certain black marks on white paper, the meaning of which they hold in common: this is symbolism or *mental* currency. *Spiritual* currency is sacramentalism. God, as revealed in Christ, conveys His Grace, or life-giving spiritual impulse, through the medium of sacraments. In the two 'generally necessary to salvation,' the vehicles of His Grace are respectively water, and bread and wine. The water of Holy Baptism signifies death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness—death because we cannot breathe under water, and rebirth because we breathe again when we emerge from it under new conditions—no longer 'children of wrath,' or subjects of the usurping Prince of this world, but children of God by adoption, pledged to do His Will on earth as it is done in Heaven, and to advance His kingdom.[1]

Again, in the Most Holy Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood, we become partakers of His life which is conveyed to us through the same materials that nourish our earthly bodies, and also nourished His when on earth. By the process called 'metabolism' we transmute ordinary food into the living tissue of our bodies which take advantage of the chemical energy resident in organic compounds, and make them subserve the life of the higher organism. The same process enables us to take advantage of the *spiritual* energy imparted to the bread and wine in the Eucharistic Sacrifice by the same creative power that endows ordinary food with the *chemical*

[1] In Baptism by affusion, as is usually practised in the West, the symbolism is lost, but the Sacramental efficacy is not thereby affected. It is not generally known that Baptism by immersion can be legally demanded in the Church of England.

energy utilised for the building up of our natural bodies. The bread and wine therefore become in a very real sense the Body and Blood of Christ into which we are grafted, and the vehicle of the Divine purpose concerning us, which is to bring our wills into harmony with His Will.

Accordingly, it is the custom in Catholic worship to adore the consecrated species in which our Lord may be said to localise Himself, thus giving us the opportunity, of which Catholics gladly avail themselves, to pay that outward homage which all Christians would assuredly render if He were to appear to us in the form He wore on earth. As we have already pointed out, that this was the general belief of Christendom up to the time of the Reformation is indisputable, and we are not aware of any scientific discoveries that render its acceptance more difficult at the present day than during the first 1500 years of the Church's existence. In this, as in all matters with which this book is concerned, we claim to have established that the current notion that belief in the Catholic Faith is incompatible with the light which the progress of science has shed on the nature of man, his relation to the physical universe, and the history of his mental and spiritual development, is a delusion of which the educated classes should be ashamed, for it implies ignorance, not only of history, but of the trend of modern scientific discoveries. In these days what is required more than anything else is the creation of a public opinion that the Christian religion is our only refuge against impending social catastrophe, and this must be the work of the educated laity, without whose support the clergy are working at an unfair disadvantage. Fortunately, the working classes in England are not, as a whole, hostile to the Church. Many of them are, indeed, attached to it more or less loosely, and some to one or other of the Nonconformist bodies. A few, and the number is growing, are even good and devout Catholics. But though their attitude towards the Church, unlike that of the working classes on the continent of Europe, cannot be fairly described as hostile, they are critical of its alliance with property and capital. They are convinced that their aspirations after a better social

order cannot be realised without religion, but three centuries of Protestantism have obliterated the last traces of pre-Reformation tradition, and they have come to believe that the Church of England is on the side of wealth and privilege. Though they may have a great respect for individual priests, they distrust the clergy as a body, and take small account of the differences between 'High,' 'Low,' and 'Broad,' as of a game in which they are not interested, and therefore take no trouble to understand.

But the 'masses' (to use a cant phrase) are not averse to information, and are quite as open to conviction as the 'classes'; and it is here that the educated laity, when they are converted, can strengthen their poorer brethren, and do really valuable work in clearing away the accumulated rubbish-heap of prejudice and suspicion which the latter have inherited from the past, and is a foul compost of the *débris* of Protestant superstitions and memories of political servitude. This is a work of time rather than of difficulty, as the writer can testify from his own experience of the *Guild of S. Matthew* more than thirty years ago, and its work among the 'Secularists' of that generation who, armed with the science of our fathers, busied themselves in slaughtering the religious convictions of our grandmothers.

But the chief task of the cultured laity will be to draw the *more intelligent* of the working-classes into the net of the Catholic party in the Church (the rank and file are best left to the clergy); they can point out that the Catholic Movement is a much larger thing than the revival of ancient customs and ceremonies in public worship, but has for its chief ideal a return to the healthier social conditions that were destroyed by the Reformation, to the principles of which the evils from which we are now suffering can be directly traced. To the days when the Church was on the side of the people against tyrannical kings and barons, and its leaders trusted accordingly. To the days before the Jews were allowed to corrupt commerce and industry, and force their methods of conducting business on Christians who were obliged to adopt them in self-defence. To days in which, if they could be revived in modern

conditions, the Church of All Saints, Margaret Street, for instance, would be reserved once a year for the proprietors and employees of—let us say—Messrs. Bourne and Hollingsworth, on the anniversary of that firm's foundation, and a Mass and *Te Deum* sung to give thanks to God for the prosperity of the business, and the benefits which had accrued in consequence to *all* connected with it: with a collection, perhaps, for a fund to supply less fortunate drapers with the capital for want of which they are often embarrassed, and have to trade at a disadvantage. That in these days this idea should seem extravagant, especially the collection for 'competitors,' only shows how far we have departed from Christian practice in our ways of carrying on business. At any rate, everyone would admit that if such a thing were possible it would give a great impetus to the movement for 'profit sharing,' which is put forward by many as the sole panacea for conflicts between Labour and Capital.

Here we must stop, for there is no need to indicate the abundant possibilities that lie to the hand of every educated layman who takes his baptismal vows seriously and is willing to consecrate himself to the service of God. If his chief aim in life is, as it should be, the establishment by example and precept of the Kingdom of God and His justice, and the destruction of the kingdom of Satan and his injustice which lies at the root of all our social distress, he will quickly recognise that the very best way of doing this is to co-operate with the clergy in restoring to England the priceless heritage of Catholic Christianity of which she was robbed in the sixteenth century. If, with the help of God, we succeed in doing this, we may yet avert the destruction which is bound to overtake all nations who will not repent of their sins and accept the salvation freely offered in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

# APPENDIX

## ON THE NATURE AND MINISTRY OF THE ANGELS

Considering how large a place these mysterious beings occupy in Holy Scripture, it is astonishing how little they are taken into account in modern theology. The writings of S. Paul are full of references to the part they play in the Divine Economy, and in the Apocalypse of S. John they are represented as the chosen agents of God's will, and the executioners of His righteous judgments in the world. The angels are, in truth, the ministers of God's Providence, by means of which He controls the 'unruly wills and affections of sinful men,' and orders the course of human events.

But more than this: they are the connecting link between spirit and matter, and are consequently an essential element in Christian teleology, for they are the ministers of the Word in His aspect of Creator, Vivifier and Sustainer, and the life that is in them proceeds from the Holy Spirit, the Eternal Source of life. It may be said, 'Granted that the phenomenal universe has its origin in the noumenal, why should we seek to differentiate the latter?' The answer is, that the logical sequence of analogies demands it. Creation implies intention, desire, thought, work; and these are properties that imply limit and can only be predicated of finite beings. Moreover, the imperfect and circumscribed nature of this creation precludes the idea of its being the direct work of the Infinite and Perfect, but a process in time.

Of God's nature in Itself we can and do know one thing only: that It is transcendant Love. Now love is the manifes-

tation of self to that which is not self. How, then, is the Love of the Father revealed? In and through the Son Who, by manifesting in *time*, returns the love of the Father by revealing it; for otherwise the Love of God would be manifest only to Himself. We may regard the Universe as a theophany or the externalisation of the Divine Love. The Son is, therefore, the Cause of the Universe, or as S. John puts it, 'All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that is made,' for the effect is the unfoldment of the Cause *in time*. By limitation the Son becomes the Divine Reason, or Wisdom—the connecting link between the relative and the absolute.

In the Kabbalistic 'Book of Zohar' (i.e. Light), the principle is thus formulated—'All that is has its origin in Ain-Soph' (or the Divine Wisdom). 'But the idea is at first undeveloped; it lies enfolded within itself. When the idea begins to expand it arrives at the degree of *spirit*, then it takes the name of *intelligence* (or the reason of the creature) and is no more, as before, hidden; the idea has externalised itself.' Accordingly it is through the 'Sephiroth,' or intelligences, that the 'Ain-Soph' issues ultimately in the plastic principle of the universe.

The Sephirothal series of the Kabbalah, however, is open to one grave objection. It takes no account of the element of illusion, of which time and space are the vehicles, being categories of human thought. It is a necessary element of the theophanic doctrine, for the Universe is not real because it is not eternal. God is the only Reality, and the Kosmos is a reflexion of Him, as it were, in a mirror. To deny this is Pantheism, which takes the reflexion for the reality and thus lays itself open to the charge of atheism. In dealing, therefore, with the process by which the Eternal manifests in time, I prefer to adopt the Dionysian series, which not only has the advantage of being in accordance with Christian tradition, as probably being derived from S. Paul himself, but meets all conditions required in Christian teleology. Dionysius the Areopagite, said to have been consecrated by S. Paul bishop of Athens, has always been regarded in the Christian

Church as the great authority on the celestial hierarchy, and is referred to by Dante in his vision of Paradise as—

> ' . . . quel cero
> Che, giuso in carne, più addentro vide
> L'Angelica natura e'l ministero.'
> *Par.* Can. X.

It is true that modern criticism assigns a later date to the writings which, at one time, were directly attributed to him, but this is of little consequence. Pseudepigraphy was formerly a very common method of embodying tradition, and there is no reason to doubt that the unknown compiler has fairly dealt with the materials of which he was in possession.

In these writings we have collected and focussed all extant traditions in regard to the celestial hierarchy, and the system thus elaborated is not only in harmony with the best modern thought, but does not run counter either to Holy Scripture or to the Christian view of the relations between God and man. According to the Dionysian scheme, there are nine orders of celestial beings, and grouped in triads they correspond to the Brahminical ' Trimurti,' or Elements, in the developing process by which the material universe was evolved out of pure spirit.

| First Triad. | Second Triad. |
|---|---|
| Seraphim (Σέραφιμ) | Dominions (Κυριότητες) |
| Cherubim (Χέρουβιμ) | Mights (Δυνάμεις) |
| Thrones (Θρόνοι) | Powers ( 'Εξουσίαι) |

Third Triad.
Principalities ( 'Αρχαί)
Archangels ( 'Αρχάγγελοι)
Angels ("Αγγελοι)

The first triad cannot properly be termed separate beings, but rather Divine faculties or emanations. They correspond to the ' Adi Buddha ' of the Indian mystics, and represent the sum total of all the spiritual energy and wisdom in the Universe. Just as the brain is the centre from which radiate numberless faculties—physical, intellectual, and æsthetic—so the Seraphim and Cherubim and, in a less degree, Thrones

must be regarded as the primal outward manifestations of the Deity. They belong to the region of absolute consciousness, or *duration* as distinguished from *time*, for time is that which produces illusion. What we call the present is only a mathematical line dividing that part of duration which we call the future from that other part which we call the past. The real person or thing is for us composed of the sum of all its various and changing conditions *as it passes through our plane of consciousness*. No one could say that a bar of iron dropped into the sea came into existence as it left the air and ceased to exist as it entered the water, and that the bar itself consisted only of that cross section thereof which at any given moment coincided with the mathematical plane which separates, and at the same time joins, the atmosphere and the ocean. Even so, the sense of actuality which we derive from this succession of momentary glimpses of any person or thing is an illusion, for it is only, as it were, a cross section of the reality.

The Seraphim, then, represents the Divine Love in its absolute consciousness, the Cherubim absolute Divine Wisdom, and Thrones the absolute Divine Sovereignty.[1] The last in the series, ' Thrones,' connect the first with the second triad. It must be borne in mind that we are here dealing with modes of existence that are utterly transcendental, and accordingly, when we say that ' Dominions ' are the first *objective* manifestation of the *subjective* Divine Sovereignty and collectively the male principle of the Kosmos, we must not be understood to mean more than that they belong to the region of relativity, that is, they are *existences* on the highest plane of consciousness or pure spirit. ' Mights ' (Δυνάμεις) correspond to the Indian ' Mula Prakriti,' which is primordial substance, or pure force on the plane of spirit. It is the noumenon of all phenomena on every plane of relative consciousness, and is, so to speak, the matrix, or female principle, of the Universe, which is the fruit of the mystic union between *Prakriti* and *Purusha*, or pure undifferentiated spirit. The

[1] We must be careful not to confound the Dionysian Seraphim and Cherubim with the theophanic ' Angels of the Presence,' which, in Hebrew literature, these names are sometimes used to denote.

last order in the second triad are 'Powers.' This, however, is a very inadequate rendering of the word Ἐξουσίαι, which denotes objectivity. They are the only ones in this group who, in any human sense, can be said to exist objectively, and are of two kinds, the Powers of Light and the Powers of Darkness. The Powers of Light are the 'Elohim' (gods) of the first chapter of Genesis, who speak in the first person plural ('Let *us* make man in our own image'),[1] and the seven spirits (or breaths) of God mentioned in the Apocalypse. They are in a certain sense the creators of the world; that is to say the world proceeded from them, for the idea which is popularly held of creation as the making of something out of nothing is absurd, if for no other reason than that it is inconsistent with the doctrine of the omnipresence of God. Each of the seven breaths is correlated to the sevenfold occult forces of nature operating on different planes of consciousness, and these occult forces are correlated, in their turn, to potentialities inherent in every human being, but of the nature of which the large majority of men are totally ignorant. The creator of the material world was Jahve (or Jehovah), the Lord of form. And here it is necessary to correct an error so widely prevalent that the very notion of its being an error will fill many people with astonishment. It has somehow come to be taken for granted that Jehovah is the First Person in the Holy Trinity, and yet there is not the faintest shadow of authority for such a statement from beginning to end of Holy Scripture. S. John expressly states

[1] It is quite a mistake to suppose that the plural form has any reference to the Holy Trinity. One of the unhappy results of the admission of the 'Filioque' clause into the Nicene Creed without œcumenical authority has been the tendency, in Western theology, to 'divide the substance' of the Holy Trinity. The use of the terms Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, to signify respectively the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is most misleading. If by the Son all things were made, why should the Father be considered as the Creator? and if, on the other hand, the Holy Ghost be the Lord and Giver of Life, the life which is *in* the Son (S. John i. 4) is derived from the Holy Spirit, eternally proceeding from the Father, to Whom the term Fount of Deity rather than Creator may be more properly applied.

that by the WORD all things were made. Our Lord said to the Jews, ' Your father Abraham rejoiced to see *my* day and was glad ' (S. John viii. 56). Everything points to the fact that God always reveals Himself, whether as Creator, Redeemer, or Sanctifier, in, by and through, the WORD, nor is it possible to conceive of any other way in which the Eternal could manifest in time. The manifested Logos is called by the Hindus ' Iswara ' (the Lord), or the highest consciousness in nature, and is a compound unity of manifested living spirits, plus their divine *reflexions* on the plane of illusion.

Thus it is that the Powers of Light (' Maha Buddhi '), though one in their essence, as the manifested Logos, are reflected in *time* as seven, which emanate from and return into, the Logos, each in the culmination of its time. Of these seven Jahve is the Lord of form. The other six preside over the evolution of beings who exist in what is called the region of ' Arupa loka,' or the formless. No further information on this head can be given, as such knowledge pertains to the higher mysteries, and can only be conveyed in words which, as S. Paul says (speaking as an Initiate), ' it is not lawful to utter.'

As God by the Word created all things, so the Word by Jahve created the *universe of form*, and revealed Himself as Man to men. In the book of Genesis a clear distinction is made between the work of Jahve and the work of the collective Elohim. And both are distinguished from El-Yon, the Supreme, or Most High. We read (Deut. xxxii.) that when the Most High separated the children of men the LORD (Jahve) *took for his portion* Israel, Jacob being the *lot* of his inheritance. The theophanic angel of the Lord was Michael, whose name signifies ' like unto God,' and he was the Jewish national deity, or *Prince* of Israel. And here we touch the fringes of a great mystery. Though our Lord Jesus Christ took not on Him the nature of angels, yet ' in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead.' Though ' raised far above Principalities and Powers,' He manifests through them in virtue of that fullness. We may, therefore, regard Him as displaying, under the Jewish dispensation, the activities which are represented by these celestial orders. S. Paul teaches

clearly (Gal. iii. 19) that the law was of angelic origin, and Clement of Alexandria says, ' formerly the Word was an angel, but . . . the Word has *appeared* and that mystic angel is *born* ' [1]—or has taken on Him the *nature of man.* Of course, by the term ' angel,' he means the theophanic reflexion, and this brings us to the third group—Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. Though the term ' angel ' more properly belongs to the lowest order of the celestial hierarchy, the ministering spirits and guardians of individuals, it may be, and in point of fact is, taken to signify all the spiritual being of the third triad, for they are actual *ex*istences with intelligence and free will. They are neither pure undifferentiated spirit, nor, exalted though it be, is their consciousness absolute or unconditioned by time. The Principalities, though collectively omniscient, are not omnipotent. Their will-power is irresistible, but irresistible will plus omniscience is not the same thing as omnipotence. The Archangels are not omniscient, though their knowledge transcends all human conception, and by their wisdom the nations of the world are guided, each in its appointed order fulfilling its part in the evolution, physical, intellectual and spiritual, of the human race. But they have never fathomed the lengths and depths and heights of the manifestation of the Divine Love, and before the mystery of the Incarnation they veil their faces and cry ' Holy, Holy, Holy.' The Angels are not omnipresent, for though they are not subject to the limiting conditions of space,[2] their sphere of action is this world : and their office is the ministry to individual man of the Divine Love which embraces all creation.

It will be observed that the functions of the third triad are inverse in the order of dignity when compared with the first. The highest Divine faculty, Love, is represented by the highest order, Seraphim ; Cherubim, or Divine Wisdom, comes next, and Thrones, or Sovereignty, last ; whereas, in the third triad, the Angels, ' or ministers of Love,' are the lowest, the ministers

[1] *Pæd.* bk. i. ch. vii. See also Justin Martyr, *Apol.* secs. 6 and 63, and *Tryph. Dial.* secs. 34, 56, 60, and 93.

[2] Hence their symbolic wings.

of Wisdom are higher, and the ministers of Will higher still. The reason of this is because they are *existent* beings.

God, as we have said, is the One Reality, and the Kosmos is His reflexion. Let me not be misunderstood, however. Reality is that which Is. But the human criterion of reality is objectivity, and things are subjective or objective according to our states of consciousness. The highest truths have, for those who can realise them, an objective existence; the grossest material forms have no existence for him who cannot perceive them. For us, the real is that which we can *realise*, or objective existence, and, accordingly, the third triad is real in the sense of being objectively existent, and only unreal in the sense which it shares with all creation of being, not God, but His reflexion in *Maya* or the medium of illusion.

I will now deal as briefly as possible with the functions of the third triad. Principalities may be described as the angels of periods. It is very difficult to convey a clear idea of the nature of their activities, but the task must be attempted. Every age has, so to speak, its own idea or *Zeitgeist*. Now it is a commonplace that ideas rule the world. But it is not generally known that they derive their potency from the spiritual force which lies behind them, and prepares the world for their reception. Was Luther the cause of the Reformation? In a sense, undoubtedly he was. But, if Luther had been born in the tenth century, he would have lived and died an obscure monk. On the other hand, the sixteenth century could not have passed without some great religious convulsion. Men do not cause the *Zeitgeist*, they co-operate with it. All great movements in the external world are the results of battles fought and won in the spiritual region. A conflict, in which innumerable hosts have been engaged, finds its ultimate expression in half a dozen human organisms who, overshadowed by the victors, become the leaders of a new movement. Of this, however, I shall treat presently in connexion with the Archangels. To the order of Principalities belongs the mysterious being called Satan, whom it is a mistake to confound with the Devil. To this confusion may be traced the controversy as to whether the Devil is or is not

a person. Strictly speaking, the Devil has no existence, in the sense that cold has no existence—it is absence of heat. But to refuse to take account of the Devil in theology is as unreasonable as to refuse to light fires in the winter because science teaches that there is no such thing as cold. Satan, however, or the *manifestation* of the Devil, is a personality and the usurping king of this planet. But he is not, as Milton taught, and it is generally supposed, a fallen archangel, like Beelzebub, Mammon, etc. We are expressly told by S. Jude that the Archangel Michael recognised his superior dignity, in that he durst not bring against him a railing accusation.

Archangels are generally described as 'angels of races.' But this gives us only a very imperfect idea of the functions assigned to this celestial order, which are not always subject to ethnic limitations. In what are called the 'Canonical Scriptures' only two are mentioned by name—Michael and Gabriel (the latter belongs to the theophanic class)—but in the book of Enoch, which is accepted as canonical in the Abyssinian Church, we find the names of several others, such as Phanuel, Surakiel, and Raguel, and these are not angels of races, but of departments of human activity in all races. Thus, Phanuel presides over repentance, and the hope of those who will inherit Eternal life, and Surakiel over those who transgress the moral law. This is very curious and suggestive of the way in which God 'orders the unruly wills and affections of sinful men,' by the establishment of a spiritual hierarchy with due relations of control and subordination whose office it is to resolve into harmony the discords of the world, and in its entirety constituting what is called Divine Providence.[1] Archangels are the Dhyan-Chohans of the

[1] It is to be hoped that the Church of England will, at some future time, see her way to readmitting into her Canon of Scripture the long lost and lately discovered book of Enoch. It is most valuable as supplying materials for a theory of the universe which will harmonise with modern thought. The fact that it was not written by the patriarch Enoch, as was generally supposed until the time of Origen, is no reason why it should be excluded, any more than the Epistle to the Hebrews, or the book of Daniel, on the grounds of doubtful authenticity.

Oriental religious systems, and are of two kinds, the ascending and descending. The former are the advanced entities of previous great cycles who, having perfected themselves beyond the highest limit consistent with any given condition of planetary life—our own for instance—pass on to the Dhyan-Chohanic condition. Others there are who, evolved out of the infinite womb of Prakriti, or the Mother principle of Nature, are coursing towards the outermost limits of existence. With this distinction, however, we are not now concerned but with another; their division into good and evil angels, between whom there rages an incessant conflict. I have said that all great movements in the external world have their origin in the spiritual world, and that the conflict of ideas which marks the transition period between one historical epoch and another is, as it were, a copy of a battle already fought and won in the spiritual region. On such a transition period we entered about forty years ago. The reader may take the following facts for what he thinks they are worth. The year 1879 marked the close of an epoch in the intellectual life of Europe and America. In that year the hosts of light, under S. Michael the Archangel, obtained a decisive victory over the hosts of darkness led by Beelzebub and Mammon,[1] in a series of battles extending over a period of thirty or forty years. About the middle of the last century, the Fifth Root Race touched the point known to occultists as the point of physical intellectuality, or the lowest in its evolutionary cycle. Its upward progress, if it is to preserve its cyclic path, must be in the

[1] Beelzebub has been called the 'God of flies.' Disease germs would be more correct. The life of these microscopic creatures which are the cause of zymotic disease, and, indeed, all forms of parasitic life, vegetable as well as animal, are determined by lunar influences, and are consequently under the control of the Lord of the Eighth Sphere. This is well known to those who practise in the higher kinds of evil magic or sorcery. Mammon (whose name is derived from the Syriac word for riches) is one of the 'Rulers of the darkness of this world' (Eph. vi. 12). He is the god of 'barriers,' and presides over all those evil influences which are begotten of ignorance, prejudice, and fear. It is for this reason that he is supposed to be specially connected with material wealth, as constituting a false standard of worth and dignity.

direction of *spiritual* intellectuality. It is very difficult to convey to the ordinary reader the meaning of these terms which, it must be confessed, are rather clumsy. Physical intellectuality, however, may be described as the tendency to regard as unreal all that is incapable of definition and measurement by human standards. It is a period of limits and boundaries, of mechanical authority in religion, of atomism in science, and of individualism in politics. Spiritual intellectuality is all that physical is not—freedom of thought in religion, pneumatism (if I may coin a word) in science, and socialism in politics.

On this period we have, as I have said, already entered. In the spiritual region the battle has been fought and won, but some years must elapse before its effects begin to show themselves plainly in the world.

We now come to those beings properly termed angels, or ministering spirits. This word 'ministering' has given rise to some confusion of thought. An idea prevails that the angels are all *our* ministers or servants, but this is a mistake. Even the appointed guardians of individuals minister *to* God *for* us. They are called in the original 'λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα,' and the adjective implies Divine Service.[1] Our Authorised Version is also responsible for another error, viz. that the angels are pure spirit, and also of a fiery nature. Angels are not pure spirit: they are spirit plus soul, and only one class can be properly called fiery. It all arises from a mistranslation of Psalm civ. 4. The proper rendering is, 'Who maketh the winds his messengers and flames of fire his servants.' The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has taken a clever advantage of the LXX version to press this text into his service. He cannot be accused of dishonesty, as the word πνεῦμα signifies equally wind or spirit, and ἄγγελος is the same as messenger.

The angels, then, are dual in their nature, as are all created beings except man, being spirit and soul. All creatures below man, whether animals on the material plane, or those beings

[1] One word, 'liturgy,' or the service of the Altar, is derived from the same source. In Greek, λειτουργεῖν is to say Mass.

which we call immaterial because the matter of which their bodies are composed is imperceptible to our senses on account of its tenuity (and which are known as ' Elementals '), are soul and body.[1] Man alone is a trinity, or the image of God. It has sometimes been alleged as a reproach against the unfallen angels that they are will-less, but this is not strictly correct. It must be remembered that, as representatives to the individual of the Divine Love which embraces all creation, they are spiritually automatic, and cannot be otherwise without losing their purity. To this danger, however, they are in reality liable at a certain stage in their evolution, and when that moment arrives their latent will-power will assert itself in a direction which cannot be named, as knowledge of this kind belongs to the higher mysteries.

We have now to consider how far communion with the angelic host is lawful ; in other words, may we pray to them without falling into the sin of idolatry ?

We may regard prayer as a form of spiritual energy, having an intellectual value, and capable of being expressed in terms of will, as will-power is a form of vital energy, possessing a mechanical value, and capable of being expressed in terms of motion. Now the difference in the effects produced by a given quantity of energy on the physical and intellectual planes is apparent, if we compare the value of a day's work by a bricklayer's labourer and a man of science. In the same way, those who are acquainted with the laws of psychical dynamics know that the work produced by a fixed amount of energy on the intellectual plane is, in turn, enormously inferior to that produced on the plane of spirit. The words ' *laborare est orare* ' contain a profound truth. If, then, to pray is to labour on the spiritual plane, who can tell what results may not follow from communion with those unseen intelligences who, in the order of God's Providence, stand in

[1] The Elementals are sometimes called ' Nature Spirits,' the term ' spirit ' being often used loosely to designate immaterial intelligences. Strictly speaking, they are not *spirits* at all, for they have no moral responsibility, but only will and a very automatic kind of intelligence. The angels are the true Nature Spirits.

direct relation to the hidden forces of nature, and wield the powers entrusted to them in conformity with the Divine Will? If it be true that innumerable multitudes of angelic beings fulfil the commands of the Almighty, as responsible agents, in administering the affairs of this and other worlds, the great difficulty of reconciling prayer with the reign of law disappears. For, on the theory of the universe which we have been considering, law is not the result of blind inexorable force, but of *cosmic ideation*. Prayer may be regarded, therefore, as the translation into will-power of spiritual energy, and is part of the machinery, so to speak, by which the universe is governed.

Perhaps no kind of prayer has been the subject of more ridicule than prayers for rain or fair weather. But whom is it intended to crush—children who pray that it may not rain on a holiday? 'No!' thunder our scientific meteorologists, 'but the clergy of the Church of England, with the Archbishop of Canterbury at their head, who know, or ought to know, that the state of the atmosphere is regulated by laws which have no possible connexion with the desires of any individual or set of individuals.' But is this really so? We know very little of the laws which regulate atmospheric conditions beyond the fact that dryness and humidity in the air are caused by variations in local temperature which, in turn, depend largely on terrestrial magnetism. But what is magnetism? A mode of energy. But will-power is also a mode of energy. Are our scientific men prepared to assert definitely the absence of any common value between the two, such as is admitted to exist between magnetism and other forms of energy—heat, electricity, etc.? Is it so very unscientific to believe that the desire of a whole community, concentrated on this particular object, may possibly liberate forces which may not be without influences on terrestrial magnetism?—let us say, by vibratory coincidence. Of course, in our present state of knowledge, or rather ignorance, of the laws of nature, they are not justified in assuming more than the bare possibility that such may be the case, but in the absence of any proof to the contrary the charge of superstition cannot be maintained.

Prayer, then, being the liberation of spiritual energy, it is a question not only of theological, but of scientific, interest —to whom should it be addressed? Let it be remembered, in the first place, that the recognition of, and communion with, those 'gods many and lords many' who, like ourselves, live, move and have their being in the Great Unconditioned Cause, is *not* idolatry, so long as we maintain a firm grasp on the truths enshrined in the Creeds. On the contrary, paradoxical as it may sound, it is really a safeguard against that sin. For what is idolatry but the rendering to another of that supreme worship which is due only to the HOLY and UNDIVIDED TRINITY. It has even been ruled irregular by several councils of the Church to address our prayers *to* Christ, instead of *to* the Father, *by* the Holy Ghost, *through* Christ. This seems very strange to modern Christians who are accustomed, for the most part, in proportion to their devoutness, to concentrate the whole of their devotion on the Person of our Blessed Lord. Indignantly as they would repudiate Sabellianism in words, it cannot be denied that many good people, in their anxiety to avoid the Arian Scylla, manifest a tendency in the direction of the Sabellian Charybdis.[1] Be that as it may, angel worship is the traditionary antidote against anthropomorphism, which is not only a grotesque and degrading conception of the Supreme Being, but utterly incompatible with a right belief in the Holy Trinity. For the very highest conception that we are able to form in our *minds* of a Great First Cause falls immeasurably short of the real dignity of even an Archangel, and to render Divine homage to such a being is to rob God of His due. Are we then denied access to God the Father because our mental faculties cannot rise to the conception of Him? A thousand times, No! Through Christ Who is the express Image of the Father, we have this access in the sacrament of His Body and Blood. The more perfectly our human life is assimilated to the Divine Life

[1] In the Roman communion this tendency is very marked. Devotions are encouraged, such as the cultus of the 'Sacred Heart,' which an orthodox Christian of the third century would have regarded with considerable suspicion.

the more clearly will the Father be revealed not *to* us but *in* us. It is not intellect but love which reveals the Father, and in the filial love and obedience of the Perfect Son the revelation is full and complete. The ministry of His Law is committed to the Angels, the ministry of His Love, which is Himself, to His Blessed Son. But if the Angels are ministers of the Divine Law, we are surely justified in rendering to them that inferior homage which has always been claimed for them by the Catholic Church upon principles plainly elementary to the relations of one being to another. And if, as we have seen, prayer is the liberation of spiritual energy, communion with the angelic host, whatever form it takes, must resolve itself ultimately into the orthodox '*Ora pro nobis.*' For as the operations of spiritual beings who are influenced by prayer are also on the spiritual plane, they will fall under the same category. Of course, there are dangers to be avoided. The pursuit of truth is ever attended with danger. But with our feet firmly planted on the rock of the Creed, there is no real ground for apprehension lest the contemplation of the celestial glories, which are revealed in the ministry of the angelic host, should so dazzle our spiritual vision as to make us forget that their exalted activities have their source in the Lord and Giver of Life, to Whom with the Father—the Fount of Deity—and the Son—His express Image—the ONE HOLY and UNDIVIDED TRINITY, is alone due the supreme worship of every creature.

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